



ARCHITECTURE AND CIVILISATION.

Discussion at the first of a series of Informal Conferences held at the Royal Institute of British Architects,
24th January, 1917.

Mr. F. W. TROUP [F.] in the Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: These Conferences, as the announcement in the JOURNAL tells us, are the outcome of a suggestion made by Professor Lethaby in November after the President's Address. This meeting to-day is the first of a series of five, and from the wording of the title, "Architecture and Civilisation," one might be forgiven for expecting a discourse on the invasion of Belgium by the Germans, when the last word in civilisation (German style) showed its appreciation of some of our finest monuments of architecture. I believe, however, that what Professor Lethaby really wishes to show us is that our own civilisation hardly rises to a proper and decent appreciation of architecture in our towns. I must not delay our discussion, but there is one word that I should like to say bearing upon the title of our subject to-day. A century ago we members of this Institute would have been known as *Civil* architects, the distinction being needed on account of the other branches of architecture, naval and military. During the past century engineers have absorbed both these branches of the profession, and we have naval *Engineers* and military *Engineers*. But this is by no means the end of it. Has the County Council's architect or its engineer the chief and last word in matters of street improvement in this London area? Does not the borough engineer and the city engineer lay out the alignment of almost all new streets in this country? Again, is not *Constructional Engineer* one of the names expected and usually found in most modern town buildings? How many architects do their own constructional steel? Finally, who is this recent arrival, the *Domestic Engineer*? I think we all know the kind of work he wishes to do, and the kind of worry he wants to relieve us of. He is a friend, no doubt, like all the others before him, but where is the architect left, and what remains for him to do? And last of all, is this civilisation, as it applies to us, a sub-division of labour till the architect is left to look after the remnants—Decoration, By-laws, Ancient Lights, Adjoining Owners, Ground Landlords, the co-ordination of our engineer friends, and the financial relations between

the contractor and the patient client? It almost looks as if that is what it has come, or is coming to, and that architecture may be defined as *Civil Engineerisation* made slightly! I do not think we should complain; in fact, I see no reason why we should not be grateful for this peaceful penetration of our manifold duties. But I do think we must make note of our position professionally, and do some clear thinking on its effect on our responsibilities.

PROFESSOR W. R. LETHABY [F.] read the following paper: To show that I have not been suddenly disturbed by the war, but that I was disturbed long before, I am venturing to quote a scrap from a paper I read to the Architectural Association about four years ago. "Perhaps I should first try to justify my title ('Things to be done in Architecture') by giving reasons why anything should be done, but if anybody is satisfied with our towns as they are it would be hard to move them. I see, however, that all the countries of Europe and America are racing for the lead in civilisation. Along with commercial strife there is a culture war going forward. This idea has perhaps only been consciously worked out in Germany, but it is obvious that there a consistent endeavour has been made during the last 30 or 40 years to attain to a coherent type of modern city life. All has been done with forethought and system. Everywhere there is city pride and corporate life. Every city seems to have a large piece of pure country suburb where it goes out to picnic." It is this same question of the culture war, city pride, civilisation which I want to bring before the Institute, because I think it is its special cause. I may not succeed in putting my thought and meaning into words, but I want to beg of you to consider my *meaning* so far as I can get it expressed, and not to set about tearing my words to pieces. It has become a delightful amusement to us to differ in words, and in doing so we often ignore *things*. We really all agree in very much, but we are so eager for word arguments that if our very own opinions are uttered by someone else we are tempted to contradict them, or we raise confusing other questions in philo-

sophy or politics; questions about freedom or tariff reform or education, or the leasehold system or the theory of aesthetics; but all the time we must agree that our institutions and thoughts being what they are we must, as architects, at least aim at order in our cities and towns. We cannot solve all the bordering questions, but being as we are we do as architects desire to improve the form and means of our civilisation.

We think in words, and we talk of architecture and fine designs and art and style and so on, but we do not seem to notice with our eyes how little of these things we get in the real streets of the real towns we know—London and Leeds. Manchester and Macclesfield, Birmingham and Bristol. It is the real towns as they are that I want to get people to see, really to see with their eyes, not as statistics, or as history, or as town planning on paper, as theory or style, but with their eyes, as they are: the approach, the railway station, the High Street, the food obtainable, the music, the general means of life and civilisation, the houses, the shops, the public buildings, even the lamp-posts, and the ugly blotches of the advertisement disease. If we agree in thinking that we should at least aim at bettering all these things, I want to suggest that we need a bigger centre and substance to work from than the personal one; we need a sense of citizenship, of public order, of national spirit. We need these for ourselves; and this Institute, if I may say so, needs a collective outlook and purpose. It should be more than a large group of people of one calling; it needs to become the faculty for that part of civilisation which is concerned with planning and building. The organised profession of Medicine is more than a trades union of doctors, it is the faculty for public health; Law is more than lawyers; so also I would have this Institute consider much more fully and systematically than it has done the whole question of modern building in civilisation. To repeat what I said before, "If bodies of architects could walk down the Strand and along Holborn and see what all the architectural fuss during the last sixty years has produced they might wake up to the feeling that something must be done from the public point of view. It is not a matter of the whims, the ability or the genius of the architect, it is a matter of civilisation." A public conception of architecture would, I am sure, if it could be got into our minds, be a steadying influence in design; but, more than this, the Institute should be a centre where a body of agreed opinion on city buildings could be brought together. I am clear in the distinction between city buildings and country buildings; the latter, as things are now, are much more personal, but in a city public propriety must be considered. No architect has more right to put up an insulting building than to stand on the pavement and slap people's faces. We have to struggle continually to keep things even up to their present mark. Thus the West Central squares—such pleasant places forty years ago—have been

allowed to run down and to be invaded by the most blatant vulgarity. So also our few circuses, such as those of Ludgate and Piccadilly, are disgraceful: that at the junction of Tottenham Court Road and Oxford Street is simply infamous. Our great railway stations must be the worst in the world, the new Tube stations are draughty and untidy—gashes in the street's side—and now they are running down into accepted dirt and ineptitude. All the streets are netted over across and zigzag with sagging telegraph and telephone wires hitched on to weak parapets and trigged up to tottering chimneys—a shuddering sight when you take to notice these things. Fortunately most of us give up taking notice in infancy, and we go about communing with our own thoughts on the grandeur of architecture. No one except a wondering foreigner seems ever to have seen horrible Holborn and the silly Strand. We must attain to a sense of reality and see our cities as they actually are, and we must understand that architecture is concerned with buildings in the open air, often in the fog. The other day I went along a street which was bursting with a frenzy of design, but all the fronts had the usual frowning, smoke-grimed holes for windows, when I came to one which suddenly smiled. It had extra noise-preventing casements flush with the wall, and in a raking view one saw the glitter of sky reflections. It reopened a way of doing things which in my day had been a fad of style, but I saw that it must have been invented by Wren, or one of the building masters who saw things with their eyes. That is, when it was first done it was not called "Queen Anne," but it was thought to be reasonable and pleasant.

Let me ask you to think in bigger units than we have done, think in cities and in civilisations, not in the little kinks of art-houses for stockbrokers' wives, with their garden pergolas and smoking dens all properly illustrated in the Press. Don't think of nice drawings or style-names and tall-talk, but in facts of life and building. For too long the noble art of building has been a sycophant to snobberies which do not lead to the strength of a nation. The art of building is one of the great things in the State, and the body of architects properly make the faculty which has this in charge. I may unduly magnify my calling, but I know nothing greater than the honest old craft of building.

Our public life has been shamefully let down in the appliances of civilisation. Since the coming in of the railway flood we have just scraped along as if we felt that there was no abiding city. We have, as it were, stopped a hole with rags and tied up a break with string. Think of the post offices in the back-ends of grocers' shops; the police courts of unutterable squalor; the churches with their tawdries gas-lit in June; the leaky private houses with their cracked ceilings, and fireplaces making fog rather than heat. These things are not matters of taste and the æsthetic, they are matters of national strength,

efficiency and pride. Architecture deals with civilisation, with the means of life, with towns, and we have to find a way to a richer life; we must have more of the "plant" necessary for living in cities. Even in the excellent town-planning movement I have a fear that it may harden into a subject called "town planning" rather than be an outburst of town vitality. Our towns have to be aroused; they must provide themselves with proud public buildings in well-ordered streets; they need better organised gymnastics with stadiums free of mud; they need better means of getting food, especially in the open air. It is not the climate that has prevented the existence of cafés in England—it may have been the brewing interest. We must preserve spaces of clean country near every town; we must have better national music; we must have a sense of something going on, and get out of the ring of stifling stagnation; we must set up something of the Greek idea of town worship, a sense of community interest and national spirit. A mere point of view; would that modify in any way our practice? Besides, everybody recognises the need for order, fitness, and soundness. Do they, indeed? Look at our streets as they are; look at the titles of the papers read during the last ten years at this Institute; read a year's leading articles in the architectural Press. I really think that looking on architecture as *Primarily the Art of Building Cities* might modify our practice, and if a sufficient body of people could be got to care I am sure it would. It might get into our teaching, into scholarship studies and essays, and at last it might work out into the streets. Now at once it might be seen as a reasonable basis for criticism; we should cease to be agitated about the drawings, the design, the style, but we should be solicitous about the building. Is it city-like, tidy, economical, well lighted, neighbourly, dignified, and so on? Is *this* good architecture? few of us would agree. Is *this* a good building? we should nearly all agree. We judge "designs" for ideal sites and climates in summer weather, but the architects we know don't practise in heaven, but in places like London and Sheffield, where buildings have to live through long dark autumns, winters, and springs. We have to judge in the streets on January days, and all my lifetime there has been no judgment in the streets. I would have the "art" words, like "proportion," dropped because nobody knows what they mean, and I would have buildings tested by such generally-understandable ideas as fitness, soundness, economy, efficiency, reasonableness, intelligibility, carefulness, science, mastery, seriousness, pleasantness, urbanity, vitality, boldness, humanity, adequateness, finish, discipline, frankness, directness, durability, clearness, order, homogeneity. There are two dozen words of the type which I should like to become the stock-in-trade of architectural critics; but it almost amuses me to think beforehand what good fun might be made of this in next week's papers. Sometimes I have a

fear that we may die of our sense of humour. Outsiders and amateurs are ready to understand and sympathise if we can give them anything understandable, and I am often surprised by the fresh insight of University Extension students who have not been fully broken in to buggaboo architecture. We have had warnings for the last fifty years that style designing was of vital interest to nobody, and that it was one of the elements of unreality which were putting us to sleep as a nation.—Ruskin, but he, we say, was cracked on seven lamps; Morris, but he was a little arts-and-crafts man who did not know about the might, majesty and dominion of the wonderful occult essence called "Architecture" which is laid on to each of us in a private tap; Mr. March Phillipps, but he thinks architecture should have something to do with life, which it clearly has not; Messrs. Archer, Wells, and Clutton Brock, but they are mere literary men; Messrs. Muirhead Bone and Pennell, but they are mere sketchers. Fergusson in his way was continually preaching the doctrine that architects would be "astonished to find how easy it was to do right, and how difficult to do wrong when expressing the truth only." Robert Kerr, a forgotten critic of ability, used to say practically the same thing, and so did Emmett, a still more serious writer. These all saw interest in keen life and proud work rather than in the marvellous proportions and exquisite styles of Oxford Street and the Strand. But it can't go on for ever; some day—say, five hundred years hence—architects will have to drop this high-priest business and take to common-sense, entering into the life of their time for civilisation's sake. Daily experience shows that our own hearts are sick of the vain oblations of style incense to Mumbo Jumbo, while our minds leap at the sight of a building, if haply we may find one, direct, tidy, intelligible. It rather inconsequently reminds me of a *Punch* joke, thirty years old, of a traveller in a French shop. "Have you perfume de Jockey Club?" "Yes, sir; we keep all the English smells." Walk from here to London Docks and you will see all the English styles, but few healthy buildings confident and smiling.

What would I do? I would have this Institute find a policy in public work for our towns and concentrate on this question of architecture in civilisation. Further, I would have all the local bodies follow their lead; and where there are no local bodies, the individual architects, surveyors, builders and men of good will in every town should draw together for the purpose of getting something done in their several towns. The great riddle "Triglyphs or Crockets?" might be solved by ignoring it and concentrating on structure and the things on which we are agreed. To aim at newness of "style" would be worse than to aim at oldness of style. Begin just as we are, and taking it all for granted let the leading idea of fit and reasonable building for life's sake and the city's sake gradually become the centre of our thoughts and

effort; that is what I mean by turning the corner of style anarchy: let us concentrate on our agreements.

This Institute should become a centre of effort for better town life—that is its proper business; and it should enter into relations with political economists, publicists, and politicians; and find out what they think (if anything!) about civilisation. We should try to get into touch with engineers, and lead them to be practical and scientific, and to give up their love for squalor and wriggles; to get them to be patriotic, and not so readily hire themselves out to further spoil our towns. They might be told that in Switzerland, for instance, engineering is scientific and not a fumbling jumble of muddle, like our railways with their regular system of accidents. We may beat on our own breasts, but we cannot therefore swallow so-called science whole. The science of mere dividend hunting has to give way to a science of service. Properly speaking, of course, architecture and engineering are closely related, and if we could persuade the engineers to be scientific they might, in turn, get us to be truly artistic and do our work "just so." Thus there might be a reasonable drawing together on the common ground of the desire to build up a fine type of English civilisation. The things I have mentioned may be looked upon as preliminaries to architecture rather than the wonderful and illusive thing itself; but that does not matter, for these æsthetic altitudes cannot be brought to a clear statement, and it is desirable for us to avoid conflict on poetic, political or religious theories, and to concentrate on points where there might be hope of attaining some degree of working agreement for our job. If it is said that such commonplaces as I deal with are obvious and do not call for statement, I answer, look at the streets! How can such agreement as there is, or may be, on matters of importance to our whole national character as a keen and effective people be turned into stone and brick? that is the question. What can we do the better to bring out our true genius, which I am confident is about the best in the world?

Now, at the end I want to set down some definite propositions which sum up what I would say:

1. It is desirable to bring about some expression of agreement as to facts which would be generally admitted, and which might serve as a basis for our judgment and criticism. Agreement is necessary to development.

2. Many things which are really agreed are not made the basis of an understandable criticism: such points are fitness for function, soundness of structure, economy of means to ends, the need for light, and for easy access for repairs and cleaning, also for efficiency in chimneys, shop-fronts, skylights, windows, roof construction. We have to consider the best treatment of concrete structures, and all the questions of stone jointing and preservation, plastering, lime-washing, &c.

3. We have to consider our towns and streets as they are in fact: Edgware Road, Oxford Street, Charing Cross Road. Our disorderly railway stations must be taken for granted no longer; we must improve lamp-posts, drain-ventilators and railings; all must be made clean, smart, and decent. We must aim at the stricter control of public advertising, at smoke prevention, and at better street cleaning, and help forward all minor improvements.

4. Besides their duty to their several employers, architects must consider the city as a whole, to which each building is a contribution. A modern city should be developing types of building fit for its needs. It may be possible to find in the conception of city order and efficiency a real stimulus to building design which should do something towards lessening the disorderly anarchy of our streets. A suitable architecture, in a word, is an essential element in civilisation. Architecture properly understood is largely civilisation itself. We should seek to stimulate the interest of all architects in the towns in which they work, and we might get reports from them on those towns as centres of civilisation. It is desirable to set up advisory committees on the care and development of all our towns.

5. We must co-operate more with engineers and try to influence the powers which govern us to promulgate a policy on public art; we need a statesmanship at the Institute which shall obtain more recognition of our need of the means of civilisation, and we must recognise on our side that we are ministers of civilisation rather than purveyors of whims. This Institute should concentrate on a positive constructive policy, directing its education to the same end of the public welfare: its prize subjects, essays, scholarships might all be made to work in the same direction to the avoidance of much waste. We must aim at getting something done: it is a question of anarchy or order, of life, of survival. More and more the idea emerges that every art, science and craft must be a guild or faculty for that matter acting in the public service.

6. We should consider whether the reinstatement of some such officer as the Surveyor-General would help us forward. Up to the first quarter of the nineteenth century some sort of effort was made to get the best men to do important public works, then something happened which I have not quite made out, and the custom was broken. In 1819 the Surveyor-General was not Smirke or Pennethorne or Cockerell, but some Colonel Stephenson. In the latter half of the eighteenth century the Dances were surveyors to the City works and did buildings like Newgate and St. Luke's. We need an enquiry as to such offices. If they could be bettered in London it would react on all borough surveyorships in the country.

I want this Institute to make this question of architecture and public life its chief work until our

towns are better places to live in—that is, truly civilised.

MR. HENRY WILSON read the following remarks: The subject "Architecture and Civilisation" is a vast one. Yet the two terms need a third for logical completeness. Civilisation is incomplete without Culture—meaning, of course, agriculture. To discuss this triad is like discussing the formative principle of all things. What the relations between the three are, and may be, will perhaps best be revealed by biological parallel. Architecture is the shell of civilisation. The Mollusc makes shell, soul-body, Nations architecture, and each product reacts on, forms and limits that which produces it. The higher the organism the greater its choice. The mollusc in its progress can only add a rim to its shell, the body may increase its size and its activities, the nation change its architecture and its constitution and its ideal and its confines. Despite the great limitations of the mollusc it goes on, produces beauty till it dies; those of the human body when in health, beauty, fitness in physique, faculty and work. For the moment this nation has apparently chosen, or been impelled, to express itself by the slum, the factory, and the tin tabernacle, and to choose Humphreys as the supreme ecclesiastical architect, the author and finisher of our architectural hope. Architecture should be the skeleton, the musculature, and complexion of the nation, the product of the combined energies of agriculture, industry and religion (*V. Hugo, p. 173*). When an organism is healthy, its intake, uptake and output, its food its growth and activities are harmonised into beauty as inevitably as day follows sunrise. When its needs and forces cease to be harmoniously combined, when there is lack or excess in one or other, when one set of functions is active at the expense of the others, then comes disease. In the vegetable world you get canker. In the animal world cancer. In the spiritual world slavery, tyranny, greed—finally, diabolism. Malignant disease is the result of rebellious cells developing in conflict with that rule by which the organism exists as an entity, or else when that rule for some reason becomes enfeebled, or when the rule itself becomes a tyranny. Not only do we see this in the world to-day, History is largely a record, a series of records, of the process.

The horrors of modern life are the result of ill-regulated or unregulated—that is, disharmonious growth. They spring from that destructive constructiveness, that discreative creation called modern industrialism, which should be regarded, not as by its votaries as production in excelsis, but production of excesses—of every kind. Architecture or building—result of harmoniously-combined energies; agriculture, industry and religion. To-day industrialism has sapped the life of agriculture, and if unchecked by religion or patriotism or right understanding of humanity will eat up England, leaving nothing but cinder-heaps, middens and factories, becoming one

slimy, slum-strewn Rotherham set with a thousand waste-vomiting chimneys; will go on till we realise that not wealth but well-being is the ideal, not individual profit but human improvement. Everywhere and always personal profit means social loss; the search for art discovers affectation; search for watertight religion brings formalism; national aggrandisement means injury to humanity. It matters not what phase of life we study, Egyptian, Greek, Roman or Mediæval, the lessons are the same. Domination spells disaster. Look at Rome! Founded by a band of marauding shepherds, led by the skilful young brigand Romulus, it ate up nation after nation, taking all, giving nothing; its policy policing, its citizenship slavery. Though Roman law evolved from priestly and patronal privilege, law outside Rome became the *ipse dixit* of consul, prætor and prefect. Empire was imposition, not absorption; surrounding nations felt this and rebelled from the very first, and though geographically one with Rome, joined themselves to Hannibal in the desperate hope of escape from the strangling grip of the mother city. They wanted freedom of life and growth. More than that, as Rome's power grew it absorbed not merely kingdoms and nations, it devoured institutions.

The municipal power, that precious formative principle which had created the city as an entity and presided over its growth—remember that the Greek city was the achievement of the municipium—that product of the federated craft guilds, that expression of the eternally true, eternally new, religion of labour, was little by little invaded, usurped, destroyed. That done, the power of Rome began rapidly to decay. They had eaten up agriculture, the crafts, all the productivities of surrounding nations, and Rome died of self-induced inanition.

Now anyone could go on for weeks on this thesis. Instead, let us consider where we are. When a man breathes he lives, as men of science tell us, not on the breath of each inspiration, but on the products of long-previous inspirations. Nations in like manner live not in the atmosphere of to-day, but on the motives and the results of anterior actions, often long anterior.

To-day we see the bloody fruit of sixty, perhaps a hundred, years of industrialism, and nations fed on that are near decay. Yet all this while our reformers, our artists, our craftsmen, our technical schools have been preparing, whatever their defects individual and collective, the bases of a new England. We may or may not see it, we hope that our children will. Those bases are, need I say it, free, co-operative production; the passion for workmanship, civic and municipal patriotism; education by and through chosen occupations, all of which, singly or in concert, will lead to a vital building as the supreme national expression. Can we not as a result of this series of conferences suggest as one beginning:

1. The abolition of town factories and their attendant slummery.

2. The extension of country workshops and garden cities, villages.

3. The extension of craft education.

4. The provision here, as in France, of workshop schools for returned soldiers, sound as well as lame, and for munition workers.

5. Some method of regulating street building, and of reform in our methods of building production.

Of course, it may be said that all this is idealism. So it is. But it should not be forgotten that the idealist is the creator of the future. To condemn him because the dream is not now tangible or in relation to what we call reality is as if we condemned the artist because he cannot make his work as ugly as his surroundings, or as if we expected him to express his dream in London mud on the dirty wood pulp of Carmelite House.

The word to-day is with the artists. Professor Lethaby said this conference suggestion was the outcome of fright. May I leave with you this thought, we must work until the nations learn that love is at once more mighty than force, and more terrible, more awful than fear.

PROFESSOR BERESFORD PITE [F.]: It is a little difficult to be actual in the midst of so much that, though true, has been put so very forcibly. I think the real thing before us—for the Institute—is that we should universally try to forget ourselves; I am afraid our Institute will find it rather difficult to do this; so that we should regard ourselves, as Professor Lethaby indicates, as being but operative factors in the building arts of the country, and look upon the subject as a whole. If we can do that, the very first thing is to forget the distinction between builders and architects which lies at the basis of this Institute. This, of course, is a counsel of perfection. If we are going to look at the world of building as it is, rather than from the point of view that we have cherished in this Institute; if we are to look upon all buildings put upon the earth as our charge and care, we shall forget that we are architects, and include in our thought builders as well, and this will be difficult for the Institute, if not indeed impossible. The really operative powers of the community are the surveyors, engineers, medical officers and inspectors of the municipal bodies. Every municipality has a Sanitary Committee, charged with looking after the very nuisances which Professor Lethaby mentioned. The whole path of this stiff-necked generation has been strewn with "sanitary improvements," with hard-fought battles over Factory Acts, Public Health Acts and Building Acts; you must be conscious that these Sanitary Improvement and Building Committees, which have legal status and have the power of collecting money and of employing officials, exist to do something, and are doing it while the profession of architects are standing outside. If these forces which exist, and which have been created by progressive thought of the last generation or two,

can be co-ordinated with architectural interest; that is to say, if that aspect of things which Professor Lethaby has so strongly insisted upon, which makes for civilisation, the difference between distraction and peace, between that which he described as an insult to the eye and that which is a pleasure—if we can co-ordinate sanitary progress with an artistic ideal, I think we shall be doing the only thing that can be done, the only thing that needs to be done; we shall be doing that which will effect what Professor Lethaby prophesies and pleads for, the re-creation of civic ideals.

My point is, that the forces exist, and it is for us as artists, who think about the aspect of things, to seek unity of action with the sanitary and the municipal work of the country, and break down the distinction which exists between the Royal Institute of British Architects and the interests of the municipal engineer and surveyor. This will go to the root of things, and I know that practically it is not possible at present. If we were the Faculty charged with building, we should no longer say to the surveyor: "You ought not to do the work"; or to the corporation: "You must employ a member of the Institute." We should take hold of the official and make him a brother, and say: "You are charged with this duty, we will show you how to do it better, and we will show you for nothing." If the existing sanitary and artistic forces are represented imperfectly by the surveyor and his brother engineer, it seems to me practical to accept that position and make the best of it, for in these officers and organisation lie the effective means of dealing with the difficulties of our towns. I might go further, and say that, as an old member of the Institute, and hoping to remain so to the end of my professional career, though this idea may be a flat contradiction to the policy of the Institute, it is not made to wreck it but to extend its influence. But we are talking in the strongest terms, and painting our picture with the most lurid colours, for the purpose of quickening our consciences to the present position, if perchance the Institute may take the lead in this matter, apart from its professional spirit, charters, and purpose of looking after jobs for its members and excluding others who are not registered, and so forth. Probably our educational policy will be the best way of doing this. The Institute has come into possession of an educational policy, through its examinations and its diplomas. Whether that educational policy can be extended largely I do not know. If a subject is propounded by the Institute, it becomes a subject of education. If the subject were civilisation, on the line of Professor Lethaby's idea of dealing with practical town life, we might educate men who, in a generation, would bring about results, and co-ordinate their action with the effective municipal authorities of the country. Nearly all the crimes which Professor Lethaby describes in our towns are laid to the charge of

municipalities: these can correct gross advertising, the smoke nuisance, and so on, and control the whole of the building operations if they choose to do so. There is plenty of proof of the possibility of this.

I do not think architects can work long without having some ideal, or else they descend into mere tradesmen. It is forty years ago last year that I entered the profession. Then we were burning with ideals. The Gothic Movement had not spent itself, it was still hot and strong. It was followed by the Queen Anne Movement in a smaller way—E. R. Robson, who died last week, was one of her early men. And then the extraordinary Arts and Crafts Movement. But to-day there is no ideal in the architectural profession that replaces the Greek ideal of the early nineteenth century, or the Classic of the mid-century, or the Gothic ideal of its third quarter; there is nothing which induces men to throw the chance of work away for the sake of achieving a design. Nor can I conceive an architect's office at the present moment turning out a set of drawings like those by Street for St. Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh—wonderful drawings done by wonderful men. I do not think we have the men now, with all our forty years of educational progress and draughtsmanship: this has been lost. I think the architect's ideal will always come from a few students, men who are devoted to the higher studies of the profession. It is always so. Wilkins and Cockerell and the older men made that great Greek generation; and Charles Barry and men of great breadth of view in the middle of the century made another great centre of progress. These and the founders of the *Architectural Dictionary* were a set of men with ideals and enthusiasms. Finally we also had in Burges and E. W. Godwin men of the highest quality of studentship.

Have we men with ideals to compare with that condition of things? We cannot create those ideals by talking about them. But if Professor Lethaby were to set to work and build his ideas we should soon find that they would have an operative effect on the enthusiastic young men, and that is what you have to look for. If the young can be shown that the application of a pure constructive doctrine, a doctrine of fitness and beauty, produces architecture not in theory but in fact, the example will be followed, the influence will catch on, the torch will pass its light. As long as we merely sit and talk of it nothing will be done. Where there are finely typical buildings, or typical towns, or typical street planings, or typical estates, let them be pointed to, to create the enthusiasm of a new ideal. This is wanted.

I am afraid we dare not go to Buda-Pesth, or to Cologne, or to Mid-Germany and its exhibitions of town planning without having to learn moral lessons connected with their culture which would be almost impossible for us to adopt, and the drill-sergeantry which lies at the bottom of their methods would go very much against us. We shall have to get at it in the English way.

Professor Lethaby has been doing some healthy declamation. May I say with regard to the town-planning and garden-suburb movement, let us pray for the day when it may be delivered from cranks and the faddists; when one will be able to walk through a garden suburb without being afflicted with lead glazing and impossible tiling and picturesque designing; when the architecture will be straightforward. At the basis of this movement the site and road planning is the best work which has been done in England for many years; the whole system of laying out is a real advance. But let us hope that we may soon have an expression of a really modern building sentiment, instead of an affectation of picturesqueness and unnaturalness. If architects perpetuate the lead-glazing and tiling then the Kate Greenaway order of building will remain in a category of nursery wallpaper art, and never get any further. I do not think I have got anything worse to say than this.

MR. A. E. RICHARDSON [F.]: I venture to think that Professor Lethaby has intentionally sketched the canvas in crude colours to bring to our notice more vividly his personal experience of the unsatisfactory aspect of the streets to-day. We have all had an idea of the defects, but it must be understood that it is somewhat outside the scope of the Institute to cleanse the stables. It is, of course, within our power to inspect the existing machinery which Professor Pite pointed out is controlled by Borough Engineers, and departments like the County Council, the Office of Works, the Woods and Forests, and other official bodies; but unfortunately these departments are laws unto themselves, and their heads never trouble to get into touch with the Institute. In plain words, they are afraid of the Institute; the Institute is doubtful of the official attitude, and the members of the Institute are collectively afraid of each other. These conferences will bring us all together, and we shall speak with understanding from the heart. It behoves the members of this Institute to drop political questions concerning their own constitution, and to engage on greater issues. We should discuss fundamental principles bearing on social conditions; up to the present we have not recognised the perspective of social life. I do not mean in a snobbish way, but from the intellectual point of view. In turn we are not recognised by the various coteries who alone are in a position to improve matters.

Those who have been able to discuss architecture and the fine arts with politicians are appalled at the lack of insight of the majority to appreciate what architectural economy implies. It happens that one or two politicians gifted with more than average common sense, get in touch with prominent architects and load them with commissions which they are not always capable of expressing in the right direction. We must recognise that control comes from Government circles at present, and by the

time it reaches the outer ring of the profession it has weakened to extreme feebleness. Speaking of the City and the West End, it is common knowledge that new buildings are controlled by firms of solicitors and building speculators who provide the funds for erection; the result is that architects are forced by the abnormal conditions and competition to conform to the wishes of clients who are hopelessly incapable of expressing an opinion on the merits of a design. In this way many architects are compelled to accept certain rulings which are opposed to the theory of their art, and the result is a compromise. I agree with Professor Lethaby that during the past decade we have experienced not only the backwash of the worst phase of the Victorian period, but unparalleled decadence and luxury which have been reflected in terms of architecture. We are going to be very poor, and only Spartan simplicity will restore the grand traditions outlined by Professor Pite.

My own opinions centre upon one form of expression—namely, English Classic, with an open mind to the larger European tradition. I have a regard for the Romantic revival and keen admiration of the men whose genius made it, but I feel sure it is now generally accepted that modern conditions and a broad handling of Classic as a basis of style offer the best field for developments. Professor Pite has dwelt lingeringly on the works of the early nineteenth century. I, too, have followed this period, and have had the privilege of turning over some portfolios of Cockerell's containing some sketches and designs. This architect was foremost among the giants of his day, and in making a study of his sketches I have noticed the high regard for his fellows expressed in every line of the drawings, whether for palaces or lamp-posts. It is our duty as architects to get rid of luxury in our work. I do not think we can return to the policy of Lycurgus, who ruled the Lacedæmonians with such strictness, and turned the gold currency into one of iron, which made it impossible for a thief to steal £30 worth of money because it represented a roomful of iron; but we can adopt economical methods, improve the educational system in the architectural schools, and can act in an advisory capacity to reorganise existing bodies whose direct office it is to deal with the intimate amenities of the City. The policy of the Institute for the past twenty-five years has been indeterminate. This must undoubtedly be changed: the Council must get into touch with the controlling powers—namely, members of Parliament and the chiefs of Government Departments. Personally, I am entirely opposed to official architecture; it is productive of designs both costly and expressionless. Architecture will not spring up at the call of a Government Department, neither can it be summoned into being at the demand of an institute or academy. There is sufficient evidence of that in the new offices at Westminster. If any position of control is to be accorded to the Institute it should be an advisory one, not necessarily limited to a coterie of three, but

dealt with in committee. A century ago, before the days of the Institute, a group of architects called the "Committee of Taste," on which Soane, Smirke and Nash served, was deemed sufficient to deal with the growing pains of London of that time; but the individual members proved to be selfish and grasping, with the result that the Committee lost status.

The thing we have to combat is street architecture controlled by private owners acting in conjunction with incompetent architects. At present it is within the power of any financial speculator to develop sites of 20, 40 or 60 feet in the City and West End regardless of comprehensive street design. Such misguided people think only of the financial return; they have not a thought for the optical comfort of those who frequent the streets, and no regard at all for architectural cleanliness. They go on at the dictate of their own sweet wills and employ men who are not artists to interpret their greed. I know a case where the symmetry of the most important approach to London from the river is to be irretrievably ruined owing to the apathy of the City Fathers.

This pernicious method is wrong; for if the authorities are apathetic, what is the humble practitioner to do? No wonder the stuccoed conventions of eighty years ago are being turned into replicas of the ridiculous Strand.

Professor Lethaby has spoken of the principle of beginning just as we are in order to develop fit and reasonable buildings; with this view I heartily concur, but we must pay due regard to tradition, for without this nothing serious can be attempted. I must refer to what has been done by one firm of architects in America, McKim, Mead & White, who have had the good sense to pick up the threads of the old Colonial policy and to weave them with all the best motifs of the European traditions. They have evolved an academic manner, a small beginning but a sound one, which is distinctly American, and having the additional merit of being allied to the earlier period of the history of the United States without disregarding the essential needs of to-day.

Leaving the greater issues and coming down to the lesser, I have been struck with Professor Lethaby's remarks concerning stone jointing, a subject little understood by the newer school of architectural thought. It is a distinguishing characteristic of the old buildings that they were made to appear with a smooth marble surface, which gave them a superior finish. Chambers and the Adam Brothers did not have recourse to black putty jointing; they sought, like the Greeks, to eliminate the joints, which were made as fine as possible, the weather in time finding out the jointing and producing a natural texture.

Judging from the lithographs by Boys and others made fifty or sixty years ago, London was a tidier place when the Cubitts were building in Belgravia and Kensington, before the railway mania had developed to entice Londoners away to the suburbs. I cannot help feeling very strongly that the haphazard develop-

ment of the transport system during the last fifty years has helped the haphazard development of outer London.

The question is—how can we as architects put matters right? Not by indulging in Emersonian philosophy; that, as Professor Lethaby suggests, borders on twaddle. We want direct practical politics, and we can encourage a definite policy by inviting prominent men to these conferences. We do not want to talk among ourselves, but we want to ventilate our views before the men who have the ear of His Majesty's Government. In time, perhaps, we shall get a Minister with a portfolio dealing solely with the Fine Arts, and then the members of this Institute will be brought into touch with those whose duty it is to spend public funds, and so the pyramid will be complete from the apex to the base.

MR. H. V. LANCHESTER [F.]: We are having conferences on other subjects, but I think we ought to have another on this subject in order to thrash it out thoroughly and put forward some solution of the various problems brought before us to-day. We agree entirely with Professor Lethaby's aspirations. The question is—what are the best and the most logical remedies, and how can they be made effective? Mr. Wilson has suggested one, but I think there are a number of others; and I am not sure that I altogether agree with Mr. Wilson's, though I shall not challenge it at the moment. If we agree to have a further meeting on the matter, I think we might ask Professor Lethaby to summarise, and perhaps to criticise his critics, and then some of us could formulate what we think appropriate treatment for the disease. We should then be at any rate one stage nearer doing something. If my proposal meets with the approval of the company present, I will ask our secretaries to deal with it.

MR. ROBERT S. WEIR: We are only just beginning to get at things. It is not one, but a dozen meetings which are required, then we shall only be touching the fringe of the subject. It all goes back to the bed-rock: it is a matter of education. I am now on a committee that is considering craft education, and we had not met twice before we knew we were down on the bed-rock—elementary education. There is something wrong with the elementary education of the country. Everybody recognises that; the Government itself has recognised it, and a committee is considering it now. Two of our other meetings are on Education, so why not go on with the work? We have to use what influence we have to educate the people in citizenship. We must get the national spirit, and then we shall get national architecture. Every country gets the architecture which suits it for the moment. We have had the architecture of the Victorian civilisation; we want to get something better. When the men come back from the front we shall have a national spirit. Ger-

many, after it got unity and a national spirit, showed it in its architecture, such as it was. France, too, showed it in the same way. If we once get a national spirit it will be reflected in the buildings and general structural lines. I second Mr. Lanchester's proposition.

MR. WM. DUNN [F.]: I wish to associate myself with what Mr. Wilson said about Professor Lethaby's eloquent address. But I own that I am astonished to hear the general condemnation of the architecture of to-day. When I look back on my young days, and think it all over, I am not *laudator temporis acti*; the architecture we have to-day is incomparably better, and I think the standard of skill and knowledge to which architects have attained is higher than that of the men who have gone before. I think we *are* moving along the lines which Professor Lethaby would like us to move along, though not as fast as we should all like to go. If you look upon architecture as one of the evidences of civilisation, I think we have every reason to consider that evidence as highly satisfactory during the last fifty years. If you take it in regard to the English home—which, after all, is one of the chief witnesses we can have—I think it, as evolved by English architects so far as it is in their hands, is a marvellous thing: it makes towards those sweeter manners which the great Victorian poet hoped for. Tennyson took his part in doing it, because, unlike his predecessors who talked about passionate love, he showed us the beauty of our home life by making it one of his main themes. And we, given a very small amount of money and some freedom, can certainly produce the finest settings you can find in any part of the world for a happy home life; indeed, I think, by general consent, the English home is the model for all the world. As to the talk we have heard about factories, it is not so long since, in these rooms, I attended a meeting and heard one of our merchant princes, a very hard-headed man of business, telling us about rest-rooms in factories, and the need for sweetness and light, as if he had been Matthew Arnold himself. Are not our factories incomparably better than those of not a hundred years ago? Poor little workhouse brats were then kept at their daily tasks for long hours by their task-masters, who had to flog the children to keep them awake. The people who had to toil in those days had to do it in miserable dens. The factory of to-day is a very fine thing. I have not had much experience of factory building, but I have had to do with one factory at least where I have found no objection on the part of the owners to making it good, well-arranged and healthy, and as comfortable as it could possibly be. I and my partner built a factory at Chelmsford for the Marconi Company; we did not find the employers wanted to cut us down so that there should not be order, cleanliness and healthy conditions, but that there was every desire to attain these. I think every one of us who builds a house nowadays provides for sweetness and

light that you do not find in Cubitt-built houses referred to by one speaker. When we see to it that our houses are not merely domestic buildings, but really settings for happy home life, we are doing our part towards pushing civilisation along. By making the factory, the workshop and the office places where people can work under healthy conditions, we are doing a great deal for civilisation. When I was a youngster I was in the City, and I remember the conditions; to-day there is an immense improvement. I think some of us who spell art with a big A are rather led away by Art to forget the practical conditions; I always feel that if those with such great talents would think a little more of the practical side, as it is the Professor's desire, they would help us along better. It is of no use declaiming about large windows—we shall not build at all if we do not give large windows.

I was rather pleased to hear somebody speak about

“Long-haired things,
With velvet collar-rolls,
Who moo and coo with women-folk
About their blessed souls.”

I think we have gone beyond that. Architecture to-day is a fine thing, very hopeful and very promising. I have no feeling that there is a want of enthusiasm, such as Professor Pite, I think, spoke of. I believe the young men to-day are enthusiastic and anxious. It is true their enthusiasm is not directed towards the Gothic School or to the Classic School—and in my opinion it is a good thing it is not—but it is directed to many more things.

I feel at one with those who have spoken of the need of education; English education, unfortunately, is not as good as it should be, and the reason is because the people do not want to know. That is at the root of many of the defects of our system of education. In Switzerland, at a hotel table, some people were criticising public schools, when a gentleman there said: “I am a schoolmaster, and I have had letters from parents saying ‘I do not want my boy crammed with book-learning; I want you to make him a good sportsman.’” But, after all, making a good record in sport will not help the country along without something more. I was never blessed with a classical education, so I do not know much about the value of classics on training; but I know this, that classics is not a suitable means of training for everybody, nor is it the only means. One end of education is to enable a man to think properly. He learns what other people have thought by reading; but he must also, in addition to acquiring that knowledge, learn to use such facts as are before him, and to think in an orderly way how, given certain premises, to see the consequences which flow from them. Mathematics is a subject which many architects hold off from, or many did, because it was not presented in such an interesting way as it might be.

Professor Lethaby, as a teacher, has an even more arduous task than ours, which is only practising. I say the methods of teaching since I was a boy are

daily being improved. The Englishman will have to turn more and more to scientific education. Also we must have more desire on the part of parents that their children shall learn. In my own part of the world, north of the Border, the wish of parents for children to learn was universal—the Scotsmen here will bear me out in that.

I have always realised how important architecture is to the world. I remember being in Beauvais, with a member of this Institute, and I could not help feeling that that building must have far more influence on the world than any picture I have seen. And when looking at St. Mark's, Venice, you cannot help feeling that as a manifestation of human intellect it was a finer thing than any of the great pictures. Is it not peculiar that the architects of famous buildings are so little known? Every little painter of the early Italian school is known, and his history traced; the architects seem to have been, like our own Shakespeare, indifferent to fame and reputation. Perhaps it is well, and for this reason—that the public do not care anything about us; they give us very little recognition. We can get on without it. It was Sir Thomas Browne who said that to be nameless in worthy deeds exceeded an infamous history. And if the Canaanitish woman lives in history without a name better than Herodias with one, then we can do without praise. The rewards which go to the successful auctioneer and warehouseman do not come to us, and we can do without them. This is the thing we were born to do, and it is the thing we take a delight in doing; it is our part in the work of the world. I would like to say again how horrified I am to find such pessimism about what we are doing and what we have done. We are going to do better still. Looking back on the whole thing, I think English architects have no reason to be ashamed of the part they have played.

Mr. Lanchester's resolution was carried unanimously, the date to be fixed later.

The second Conference was held on Wednesday, 7th February, the subject discussed being “Education of the Architect.” Mr. Reginald Blomfield, R.A., presided, and the discussion was opened by Mr. Robert Atkinson (Headmaster of the Architectural Association's School), and was continued by the Chairman, Mr. H. Davies (Board of Education inspector), Mr. Alan E. Munby, Mr. A. E. Richardson, Mr. F. Roscoe (Secretary of the Teachers' Registration Council), Professor S. D. Adshead, Mr. Gerald Horsley and Mr. H. V. Lanchester. The report will appear in the March issue of the JOURNAL.

Further Conferences.

21st February.—“Education of the Architect” (continued). Opener, Mr. A. E. Richardson [F.]; Chairman, Mr. H. V. Lanchester [F.].

7th March.—“The Control of Street Architecture.” Opener, Sir John Burnet, R.S.A., LL.D. [F.]; Chairman, Sir Aston Webb, K.C.V.O., C.B., R.A. [F.].

21st March.—“New Materials and Methods as Influencing Design.” Opener, Mr. H. D. Searles-Wood [F.]; Chairman, Mr. E. Guy Dawber [F.].

LEAVES FROM THE LIFE OF THE LATE W. H. LYNN, R.H.A.

A SIMPLE scrap album has lately been presented to the Institute Library containing veritable scraps of illustrations and cuttings from the professional papers, photographs of executed buildings, letters and sketches all unmounted and without arrangement, and yet full of interest for architects who care to trace the career of an architect of genius as indicated in these scraps.

W. H. Lynn was probably little known personally to this generation, but he left his mark on the architecture of his time. He was the greatest Irish architect of his century, and was not only an architect of distinction but a man of character and a notable citizen of Belfast, a city which was justly proud of him and one which we are told he "seldom left except in obedience to professional duties."

The main facts of Lynn's architectural career have already been well told in this JOURNAL (25th September 1915) by his friend Mr. R. M. Young, and I need not recapitulate them here.

Lynn was one of the finest architectural draughtsmen of his day, but he used his gift mainly in so far as it helped him in his work, either in making strong pencil notes of old buildings that appealed to him, or in representing faithfully the probable effect of buildings he was designing.

Lynn was for some years a frequent attendant at the annual excursions of the Architectural Association, and he and F. C. Penrose were amongst the most indefatigable of the sketchers. Some of his drawings will be found in this album, notably the East end of St. Michael's, Coventry, a fine specimen of his uncompromising draughtsmanship. Others are the Vicar's Close, Wells; Woollas Hall and Huddington Court, Worcestershire, the two latter made during the 1881 excursion when, as President of the Architectural Association, I had the pleasure to lead through the county as enthusiastic a party of students as could be found. I have a photograph group of them before me now showing Lynn and Penrose just as boys amongst boys, and none more keen or alert than they. On the last evening of the excursion it was usual to have a little show of the drawings made during the week, when those of Lynn and Penrose were amongst the principal attractions, though there were many other fine sketchers in the party.

Lynn was also a good sketcher in water colours, but the album contains no specimen, as he probably laid less store for his purpose on this method of delineation. Penrose's sketches, on the other hand, were mainly washed drawings.

At one time Lynn entered keenly into competition work, in which he was frequently successful. The drawings were usually made by his own hand; many of them were very rough though always workmanlike, and without exception showed a grasp of the problem with one central idea governing the whole. These

were made principally in the 'sixties, in the comparatively early days of competitions, when the conditions were often carelessly drawn and the decision was in the hands of committees with little or no professional advice. The roughness and apparent incompleteness of his drawings was sometimes wrongly mistaken for careless or incomplete work, as may be seen from some, and that not the least interesting, of the correspondence to be found in this album.

One of the competitions Lynn entered into was for the new Council House at Birmingham with, I think, Mr. Alfred Waterhouse as assessor. Lynn submitted a very fine plan with a suggestion for linking up the existing Town Hall with the new buildings. The assessor reported that the drawings were too incomplete for acceptance, but advised the Corporation to purchase them for the sake of the idea they contained, and this, I believe, was done, though the fine suggestion of connecting up the two buildings was never carried out.

Correspondence in the album shows that in other competitions, such as Leicester Municipal Buildings competition, his design was greatly preferred, but was set aside for supposed non-compliance with the conditions, often the result, I think, of pressure through preparing the drawings mainly with his own hand. His correspondence in the album with the committee on these points was direct and dignified, and models, to my mind, of what such correspondence should be.

He was a great planner, and in his hands the most intricate buildings became symmetrical and dignified, easily understood by those who used them. Alfred Waterhouse, himself a great planner, once told me that there was nothing he would better like to do than to sit behind Lynn and look over his shoulder while he pinned an antiquarian sheet to his board and laid out a large plan. Perhaps one of his finest plans was that for the new Parliament House at Sydney, a Gothic design with a very fine symmetrical lay-out. This design was selected in open competition, but never executed. Another very fine conception was his third premiated design for the Glasgow Municipal Buildings, though I believe he himself preferred his Clarke Hall, Paisley, which he won in competition and carried out. He also won in competition and erected Town Halls at Chester and Barrow-in-Furness, both illustrated in the album.

The album contains a few illustrations from the many buildings he designed during his extensive private practice, which was of a singularly varied character. He designed some seventeen churches, mostly in Ireland, the Chateau at Quebec for Lord Dufferin, then Governor-General of Canada, the Campbell College, Belfast, together with many banks and other commercial buildings, and also many large houses.

Lynn, although incapable of seeking honours, appreciated them when they came to him, as is shown by his preservation of the notification of his election as Associate of the Royal Hibernian Academy, 1865,

and as Full Member, 1872; as President of the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland, 1885, and also the award to him of a Gold Medal at the Paris Exhibition of 1867 for his drawing of the Parliament Houses and Government Offices for Sydney.

Another interesting document preserved in the album is the following account: "W. H. Lynn to the Commissioners of Public Works. To salary for attendance as Clerk of Works at Queen's College, Belfast, from August to October, 1847, nine weeks at £3 a week." The young man of twenty acting as Clerk of Works at Queen's College, Belfast, made many of the drawings for this building, including an elevation of the West front, and finally became partner with the architect of the building, Sir Charles Lanyon, to whom he had been articled.

In 1910, sixty-three years afterwards, a public competition was arranged for the enlargement of the College to meet the requirements of the new University of Belfast, and one design sent in stood out as departing altogether from the suggested arrangement, with an entirely fresh combination of the somewhat intricate group of buildings. This design was finally selected as the best, and the author proved to be W. H. Lynn, who as a young man had acted as Clerk of Works to the building, and who at 82 was still able to hold the field against all comers. It subsequently transpired that the drawings were prepared by his own hand, quite unknown to anyone, and on the assessor going over to Belfast to see the drawings Lynn left the city "to avoid the possibility of even meeting the assessor." The design was accepted and carried out to the general satisfaction, and the building was happily completed a few months before his death, which occurred in his 86th year, 12th September 1915.

It may be asked "And is this album all the record of a great architect's work?" The answer, of course, is "Certainly not." The record of an architect's work is to be found in his buildings, be they many or few, large or small. His drawings are a means to an end and not the end itself. Lynn's buildings are the record of a life which as far as I know was, apart from his work, singularly uneventful. He was never married; he was a strong man and a true artist, firm of purpose, brooking no interference with his work, shunning publicity, and sincere and modest to a degree—such was the man of whom I have ventured to pen these few unworthy lines at the particular request of a mutual friend.

I am indebted for some of the facts in these notes to Dr. Kyle Knox, and also to Mr. R. M. Young, to whom I have already referred, both pupils of Lynn.

In conclusion, I would venture to hope that before this album is consigned to its final resting place in the Institute Library time may be found to arrange and secure in the album its contents in chronological order for the information, sparse though it is, of enquirers in the future of the work and life of a great man and a great architect.

ASTON WEBB, R.A. [F.]

EDWARD ROBERT ROBSON, F.S.A.:

A MEMOIR BY HIS SON.

TO condense into a brief memoir the very full and useful life of my father, who passed away at his residence, No. 2, The Paragon, Blackheath, S.E., after a short illness, on the 19th January, is no easy task. I can but give the salient angles, to adapt the surveyors' phrase, and if his pupils, assistants or friends detect *lacuna*, I must plead a certain haste; if I may be thought, by some, to over-praise, then a son's enthusiasm is a pardonable excuse.

Born at Durham (2nd March, 1835) he was the eldest son of Alderman Robert Robson, J.P., who was three times Mayor of that city. Being an architect and builder, my father owed his extensive knowledge of the exact use of materials to his having spent three years in his father's shops (1851-3). This step he took deliberately, apart from its being a condition imposed by Mr. Robson senior, who wished his son to enter Durham University. But, having passed his youth in sight of the unrivalled Cathedral at Durham, the central tower of which one day he was destined to restore, the grandeur of this building created in my father a passion for Architecture.

After three years spent as a workman, he was articled, for another three, to John Dobson of Newcastle-on-Tyne, then the best-known practitioner in the north of England. Here he met his future partner, J. W. Wilson Walton (later changed to Walton-Wilson [F.]), William Bell Scott, John Johnson and others.

The power to carve a definite career was shown next by my father's aspiration to be under Mr. Scott, in London. Accordingly, in 1857, he went to the famous ecclesiastical architect as an improver, and he remained there for three years working with enthusiasm early and late. He taught the late G. G. Scott ("G. G. junior" as he was called) to trace, and I have letters from him to my father of an interesting and intimate character. The comparatively small output of this great architect—incomparably the finest of the deceased Scotts—(incidentally, I may say) the discerning deplore.

The year 1858 was spent in extensive Continental travel, and the sketch-books before me are definite evidence of sound taste and accurate work as well as an artistic touch. He, therefore, spent ten years before starting to practise and taking his fellow pupil, the late J. W. Walton-Wilson, into partnership. Chambers were taken in Adam Street, Adelphi, but, as both partners had strong connections in the north, a branch office was opened in Durham, and my father was appointed, as an immediate outcome, to the important post of Architect to the Cathedral by Dean Waddington. This position he retained for six years, during which time he restored the Galilee, the Chapel of the Nine Altars and the Central Tower. Incidentally he prevented his late master, Sir G. G. Scott, from adding a spire to this tower, for which, absolutely right obstruction, Scott never quite forgave him.

At this time, in conjunction with Canon Greenwell, he founded the Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland; the Canon is still President, and many important volumes of *Transactions* have been issued. Not long after, my father was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. His marriage, when at Durham, to the eldest daughter of the late Henry Longden, the eldest of a family which was famous as ironfounders in Sheffield, proved a most happy one. A woman of great tact, charm and dignity, she became an ideal helpmeet to the impetuous architect.

In 1864 the family of four (increased in 1871 to five) moved to 17, Faulkner Square, Liverpool, on my father being appointed Architect and Surveyor to the Corporation of that city. His application was well backed by the Royal Academicians, Smirke, Street and Scott; by Ewan Christian, William Burges, Sir J. Mowbray and others. Here, for seven years, he had charge of the public buildings (including St. George's Hall) and the very valuable landed estates vested in the Corporation. He also built St. Anne's Church and the Municipal Offices. When free from professional work he acted as Captain in the First Lancs Engineer Volunteers, and during the riots he was a special constable.

On his doctor's advice, as the climate of Liverpool had never suited him, he determined once again to make his *locale* London, where he lived until the present year.

In 1870, on the passing of the Forster Education Act, my father determined, if he could, to lead the way with regard to Educational Buildings. And a deciding factor, beyond his doctor's advice to leave Liverpool, was that he was barred from private practice—a restriction to which he determined never again to submit, and to which he never did submit. To this end, in May, 1871, he was to be found installed as the first Architect to the London School Board. The family then came to live at Blackheath, first in St. German's Place, and two years later, in The Paragon; a delightful segment of early Georgian houses, of which some illustrations appeared last year in *The Architects' and Builders' Journal*. In 1872 he became a Fellow of the Surveyors' Institution.

During the next two or three years, in spite of heavy strain, he managed to find time to travel to America, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, France, Belgium and Holland in search of the best schools, and in 1874 he published his well-known work on them,* as a kind of guide to the School Board as to their work in relation to architecture, as well as to architects, who were then building schools totally unsuited to their purpose.

After building some hundreds of schools for the Board and setting his mark definitely on the archi-

tectural appearance of London, on the death of Major Rhode Hawkins the appointment of Consulting Architect to the Education Department fell vacant, and the Liberal Government then in power offered it to my father. He accepted rather as a call of duty (as he knew that he had placed the planning of schools in London on a permanent basis, which anyone with a sense of planning and of clothing a plan, could continue) although he sacrificed some hundreds a year of certain income by so doing. The appointment carried with it two others, that to the Scottish Education Office and that to the Home Office. On leaving the School Board he was presented with an address enshrined in a beautiful silver Greek temple by his old staff.

Loyally as ever, he gave his first consideration to the public service, and of the exceptional claims made by these new appointments I had ample means of judging when I assisted him in Whitehall. Frequently over one hundred sets of plans, for entirely different sites, had to be reported on before he felt free to attend to his private work. But his extraordinarily rapid grasp of the essentials of each new problem held him in good stead and astonished me. Whilst most men would have been dealing with a number of ten he would have reported on fifty, clearly, concisely and soundly.

When a new Education Act created the Board of Education my father was retired suddenly on the grounds that "new measures need new men." At any rate, that was the gist of the answer given in the House of Commons on the subject. My father was less disturbed at the step taken than at the callous way in which it was done, without proper recognition of his faithful twenty years' service to the State. The fact was that he was too strong, fearless and honest a man for the new *régime*. As an index to this inflexible side to his character I will give but one telling instance: A minute paper of an important character had been reported on by my father in the usual way; it then went the round of nearly all the examiners in the Education Office, who reported unanimously that for the proposed action, which would have arisen out of my father's minute, there was no precedent. The chief examiner then sent the minute back to him with a special minute to that effect. Mr. Robson's final minute read: "Bad precedents should not be followed.—E.R.R." The red-tape of a Government Department could not stir him from a right course; *fortiter in re*, no doubt, but *suaviter in modo* conspicuously absent.

Strictly he was not entitled to a pension, as he retained his private practice and was therefore not a civil servant. But considering the great importance of the work he had inaugurated—which had more than trebled since he was first appointed—a graceful act would have been the offer of a pension, which, however, I doubt if he would have accepted. The only honour which my father ever received for his invaluable services in the right ordering of schools

* *School Architecture: being Practical Remarks on the Planning, Designing, Building and Furnishing of School Houses*. With over 300 illustrations. 440 pp. London: John Murray 1874. (2nd ed.: 1878.)

was the Freedom of the City of London. He was a member of the Skinners' Company. From this time, 1903, he devoted himself solely to private commissions.

Amongst other matters he was entrusted by the late Lord Rothschild with the re-building of the Jews' Free School, Spitalfields, the largest elementary school in the world (for 3,500 children—having no less than four halls and 76 classrooms). The only stipulation was that education should not stop for a single day. By means of day-and-night shifts and other contrivances the builder (Mr. Carmichael) and my father managed to perform this unusual feat.

Most of the large technical, and many hundreds of smaller, schools in this country have been built on Mr. Robson's advice since he wrote his standard book on schools. He knew that certain particulars were out of date, but the book is still indispensable in many ways. It was only when he told me that he would not trouble to re-issue it that I asked him to accept the dedication of my little work on the same subject. This he did willingly, and at the same time offered to suggest revisions for a further edition.

The style with which he endowed the London schools was, to all intents, a new one. It was based on a careful study of old brick buildings in London, Holland and Belgium, and it is unfortunate that indiscriminating plagiarists have travestied it in almost every town in the land. Also many of his best schools have been murdered artistically by later and undiscerning hands.

My father was assessor in many important competitions, and we travelled together often to distant places on these errands. *Festina Lente* was his motto on such work, and his careful weighing of the various points was an ideal lesson. As there is a good list of these competitions in *The Builder* of February 2, I will not give another. He was also much in request for arbitrations, ancient lights cases, and as a witness in the Law Courts.

Having traced in outline his busy public life, a few words must be written about his private work. The first client of importance was the late Right Hon. Sir John Mowbray, Bart., for whom he built a large block of almshouses at Sunderland. His client expressed himself delighted at the thorough way in which the work was done, and at the fact that there were no "extras." His largest work, the People's Palace, Mile End Road, with the schools, library, Queen's Hall, swimming-baths and clock tower, was commissioned by the late Sir E. Hay Currie, who had received a considerable grant from the Drapers' Company for this purpose. The style is Neo-Greek, and the hall is a model for builders who care to study the intricate science of acoustics.

The original design was more ambitious, with correspondingly less unity, than that executed. The octagonal library is an artistic piece of construction with classic groining embracing three bays. The embryo of this idea is to be found in the mediæval roof of the kitchen of the Bishop's Palace in Durham.

(Those classic men who are wont to sneer at all things Gothic might note.)

Queen Victoria, on opening the hall to which she had given her express sanction for the use of the name *The Queen's Hall*, was emphatic in her praise. At this time my father was offered the honour of knighthood (an honour which had been previously offered by the late King Edward, when Prince of Wales, at the opening by him of the Prince's Hall, Piccadilly), but his answer, "Plain Mr. Robson is good enough for me," although characteristic of the man, was not exactly complimentary to the art of Architecture.

The year 1883, to pass back two years, is the date of possibly his best work, the *Institute of Painters in Water Colours*, Piccadilly—a work which has had a more marked influence on certain aspects of design than any other of recent date. The germ of this *motif*, with its narrow end-bays and long plain frieze, was the back elevation of Drury Lane Theatre, but the principles involved were taken from Ruskin's *Seven Lamps of Architecture*. My father marked the passage in my copy of the first edition, and, as these laws are immutable but largely unobserved to-day, I quote from p. 115, par. xxvi, from the Fourth Lamp—"Beauty"—"Wherever Proportion exists at all, one member of the composition must be either larger than, or in some way supreme over, the rest. There is no proportion between equal things. They can have symmetry only, and symmetry without proportion is not composition. It is necessary to perfect beauty, but it is the least necessary of its elements, nor of course is there any difficulty in obtaining it. Any succession of equal things is agreeable; but to compose is to arrange unequal things, and the first thing to be done in beginning a composition is to determine which is to be the principal thing. I believe that all that has been written and taught about proportion, put together, is not to the architect worth the single rule, well enforced, 'Have one large thing and several smaller things, or one principal thing and several inferior things, and bind them well together.'"

One day my father met Mr. Ruskin, who was an old friend, in Piccadilly standing opposite the Institute, and he said that he "never passed without stopping to admire its freshness." Great was his delight when my father quoted to him the gist of this passage and thanked him for his inspiration.

The mention of Mr. Ruskin recalls an anecdote of him of a professional character. When he came to my father first with a request to design for him a museum near Sheffield, the "master," as he was called, waxed enthusiastic and said that he wanted "a roof like ice, scintillating like diamonds," and much more of a rhapsodic nature. When he had finished, Mr. Robson said: "Yes, Mr. Ruskin, but how am I to keep the water out?" "That," was the reply, "is your affair." Financial considerations prevented this project from maturing, however, although the design was made, and Ruskin was greatly delighted with it.

When travelling in Italy my father wrote to Ruskin

from Florence, concerning the Sheffield Museum, and from a bundle of his letters I extract the following characteristic reply:—

LUCCA, 2nd Oct., '82.

DEAR ROBSON,—

... I'm glad of your note with tracings, as it implies you're better—but how could you think I would be bothered about Sheffield when I was in Italy! I came here to direct you in the study of the duomo of Lucca—not to make catalogues for Sheffield. ... Please take care of yourself in the first place and let Sheffield take care of itself and me take care of myself, if I can.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. RUSKIN.

In a letter a month previous, Ruskin had warned him "not to be too much aghast at the comic inlays—I am not going to imitate them, but *study the relief sculpture* of the central gate of the duomo—till I come." This particular example of Italian art did not appeal to my father, but I have heard him say that he considered the library of Sansovino in Venice as not only one of the finest things in Italy, but probably of the world. On exhibiting the perspective drawing of the Institute in Paris he was awarded a gold medal.

The New Gallery, Regent Street, W., remains to be mentioned. This was built for the late Mr. Comyns Carr and Mr. C. E. Hallé, who came to him from that distinguished architect the late Philip Webb, who had said "there is only one man in London who can do this for you well in the time—Robson of Westminster; go to him." That was because the promoters wanted the existing market turned into a picture gallery in six weeks! My father had returned but a few days previously from Constantinople, fired with the wonderful Sancta Sophia and the right use of marble. He cased the C. I. columns of the old market with marble and otherwise utilised the existing structure, effecting such a transformation that it became the most charming gallery in London, with its central marble hall and fountain, and with but few steps. It is a satire on the present state of Commerce *v.* Art in this country that, a year or two since, it became a restaurant, and it is today a mere roof under which "movies" are shown. The beautiful Neo-Greek entrance has been ruthlessly torn from its surroundings and is I know not where! I have not space to deal with his large provincial works, as the Ladies' College at Cheltenham for the late Miss Beale, but I would conclude this notice with a few more intimate remarks revealing the influences of others on his designs.

His early work, especially ecclesiastical, was tempered strongly by French Gothic, notably after he had travelled in France with Johnson of Newcastle. Some of the plates in the latter's *Early French Architecture* were from my father's hand. He also contributed to the *Liverpool Sketch Book*, and I believe to the *Spring Gardens Sketch Book*.

After passing through the "brick period" of the School Board, a close study of work at Athens and that of "Greek" Thomson modified his views, but he never fell into the vulgar error of slighting Gothic. Good work in any style he admired unreservedly.

Of the many famous people he met, and in many

instances knew well, I could give interesting reminiscences; but this is not the place. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, however, designed for him a beautiful gold watch, in enamel, representing the sun, moon and stars on the face and an exquisite peacock—an old emblem of the Resurrection—on the reverse, symbolic of time on the wing. This I am proud to possess. Philip Webb designed furniture for him; Morris and Burne-Jones glass. To Onslow Ford he gave his first commission. And many architects, to my knowledge, owe him much for assistance gratuitously given when in difficulties on school plans.

The pungent wit which characterised my father's conversation gave him the *entrée* into many places where good company is valued, for this natural gift of wit was of the intellectual order and spontaneous. At Durham once, when he was piloting a specially-invited party of friends round the cathedral, of which he knew almost every stone, an American who had attached himself uninvited to the party and kept interpolating remarks (with his hat on) incensed Mr. Robson to such an extent that he managed to whisk off with his umbrella the intruder's top-hat on to the floor of the nave. Picking it up carefully, he bowed, and said, "I beg your pardon—was it on your head?"

Of the partnerships into which my father entered I am not fully cognisant. After the late Mr. Walton-Wilson, the late J. J. Stevenson joined him during the rush of work at the School Board. But he told me once that "he was occupied often in the afternoons rubbing out what John had done in the morning." The late Mr. Bodley had previously suggested a partnership, but for various reasons this did not mature. For some time he worked with the late John Whichcord, a past President of the R.I.B.A. There was no actual partnership, although he bought his practice. In 1910 he took into partnership Mr. J. J. Gott, a nephew of the late Bishop of Truro and who had been trained under Mr. Caröe. This connection was severed only by Mr. Gott having to join the Army.

Of hobbies my father was innocent, unless the formation of a fine collection of pictures may be said to fall under that category. Examples by Crome, Constable, Corot, Michel, Israels, De Wint, Cuyp, Mierevelt, Fulleylove, Dodgson, Boyce, Hardy, Cox, Munthe, Linton, Orrock, and many others, are sufficient evidence of a catholic taste. No doubt this was fostered by a long and intimate connection with the great connoisseur, James Orrock, from whose collection many of the pictures came.

Music he delighted in, and, having a good tenor voice, he joined frequently in glees, but any good music appealed to him except the very modern. In sport he was a moderate performer as a golfer, skater and billiard-player. We had so much in common—our relations being always of the friendliest—that my loss is difficult to estimate, but I have endeavoured to give, faithfully, some insight into the life of a great architect, of a man of sterling integrity, of a friend of lasting worth.

It was not until some five years ago, when he met with an accident in a taxi-cab, that he began to feel himself other than "as fresh as ever." But he had one enemy, bronchitis, which, having gradually weakened him, caused his peaceful passing as I have said. He lies beside his wife on Shooters Hill, beneath a beautiful granite cross of his own fashioning. I know that he will take a good report, dauntless, to his Officer Commanding. R.I.P.

The official representatives at the funeral on the 24th January were Mr. E. Guy Dawber (Hon. Sec., R.I.B.A.), Mr. H. J. Leaning, F.S.I., and Mr. W. Hatherley, R.I., and exceptionally inclement weather kept many others away.

PHILIP A. ROBSON [F.].

LIST OF WORKS.

As Mr. Robson's plans are, owing to the war, in store, I am unable to give a complete list, but I believe that nothing of great importance is omitted in the following. Competitions he always regarded as a kind of higher pastime, but I consider that, of all the plans illustrated, his for the County Hall was the best. This was made in conjunction with the late Mr. C. E. Mallows [F.]

Large block of Almshouses, Sunderland, for the Rt. Hon. Sir J. R. Mowbray, Bart., M.P.

All Saints' Church, Rainton, near Durham.

St. Cuthbert's Church, Durham.

Enlargement of Upleatham Hall for the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Zetland.

Restorations of the Great Central Tower of Durham Cathedral, the Chapel of the Nine Altars, and the Galilee.

St. Anne's Church, Liverpool, for the Corporation of Liverpool.

Municipal Offices, Liverpool, for the Corporation of Liverpool.

Shotley Hall, Northumberland, for Thomas Wilson, Esq.

The People's Palace for East London, with Library, Queen's Hall, Clock Tower, and Swimming Bath (now known as The East London College).

Institute of Painters in Water Colours, Piccadilly, and the Prince's Hall.

Nun Monkton Hall, near York, for G. Crawhall, Esq.

The New Gallery, Regent Street, London, for Messrs. Hallé and Comyns Carr.

The Great Hall of the Ladies' College, Cheltenham.

St. Hilda's Training College, Cheltenham.

Loftus Town Hall, Yorkshire.

High School for Girls, Truro.

Schools at Chester for His Grace the Duke of Westminster.

Gunton Hall, Norfolk, for the Rt. Hon. Lord Suffield, K.C.B.

Dunstable Grammar School and masters' houses.

All Saints' Church, Luton, Kent, and the Vicarage.

Wilson's Grammar School, Camberwell.

Mansion, Trosley Towers, Kent, for Sir Sydney Waterlow, Bart.

The White Hart Hotel, Windsor.

London Schools (some hundreds).

Sedburgh Vicarage, Yorkshire.

Monument to the late John Whichcord, P.R.I.B.A.

Monument to the late Prince Imperial, Chislehurst Common.

Monument to Mrs. Robson.

Monument for Sir B. Baker.

The Hall, Hampstead, for the Misses Allen-Olney.

Enlargements and Restorations of many Parish Churches.

School Board Offices, Sheffield, the Great Central School, and Firth College.

Board Offices (part) for the School Board for London.

Board Offices for the Sheffield School Board (joint architect).

Board Offices for the Driffield School Board (joint architect).

High School for Girls, Blackheath.

Large School for Girls, Baltimore, U.S.A.

Stained Glass in the Queen's Chapel, Osborne.

Stained Glass at Friedrichshof for the Empress Frederick.

House, Bow, Durham, for W. H. Bramwell, Esq.

House, near Haslemere, for T. Humphry Ward, Esq.

Enlargement of Queen's Tower, Sheffield, for Samuel Roberts, Esq., M.P.

Jews' Free School, Spitalfields.

Firth College, Sheffield (joint architect).

Bow School, Durham.

St. James's Club, Piccadilly (remodelling).

Blackheath and Charlton Cottage Hospital (extensions).

Truro House, Blackheath.

Chapel, St. Christopher's School, Blackheath.

Blackheath School (laboratory).

House, Westcombe Park.

Bailiff's house, Amersham.

House at Flitwick.

Houses, Wandsworth Common.

Holmstead Place, Sussex (additions).

27, Leadenhall Street, E.C.

Queen Anne's Mansions (2nd half), S.W.

Park Hill House, Streatham.

Sutton Rectory.

House at Duppas Hill, Croydon.

House at Sheffield.

House at Durham.

MR. WM. RUSHWORTH [F.], Architect to the Education Committee, Durham, writes:

It was with the deepest regret that I heard of the death of my late chief, Mr. E. R. Robson, F.S.A. [F.], with whom I had the good fortune to be closely associated for many years as pupil and chief assistant, thereby gaining a knowledge of architecture from one who was an ardent upholder of art as applied to building, a kindly critic, and a facile writer on architectural subjects.

The Board Schools of London and many important buildings in London and the provinces are a fitting monument of his ability and energy, but he will be remembered by those who knew him best for his great generosity and large-hearted kindliness.

Robson was a man who never spared himself, particularly when engaged in reporting on competitive plans: these would be carefully investigated again and again, the points for and against each competitor noted and tabulated, with the result that in all cases, it may be safely said, the best design was placed first and the next in merit second and third respectively; while the lucid, incisively-written reports seldom failed to carry conviction to the minds of the promoters of the competitions.

W. RUSHWORTH [F.]

THE LATE HERBERT BATSFORD.

THE death of Herbert Batsford on the 14th January after a long illness removes a striking personality from the publishing stage. His was a career of extraordinary moment to the architectural profession, for his characteristics were unique in resembling those associated with the eighteenth-century publishers, who combined the functions of editor and patron and encouraged architects to record their own impressions of the meaning of architecture.

It is no light task to pen one's thoughts of a friend whose knowledge and enthusiasm inspired respect from all he came into touch with. It will, however, be fitting homage to his memory to show him as the lineal and apostolic descendant of that remarkable group of men who published a century and a half ago from positions in High Holborn within a hundred yards of the same spot.

The early accounts of architectural book-making are closely allied to the history of the matured tradition in this country, for the confraternity of Barrabas became a distinct craft in the early years of the eighteenth century, and sufficient emphasis has not been given to the acuteness and enterprise of those men who, depending on the support of wealthy patrons and burdened with the expenses of engraving, issued the great folio volumes which are eagerly consulted to-day. In the first place, it was customary for authors to combine with printers of repute to issue books on architecture, and a variety of names can be traced relating to those who flourished from 1670 to 1730. Their imprints mostly bear curious references to the signs that distinguished their places of business, such as "The Bible and Ball in Ave Maria Lane, 1673," or "The Stole and Anchor on the pavement in St. Martin's Lane, 1729." Later in the century the name of the printseller, Robert Sayer, who flourished "at the Golden Buck in Fleet Street," becomes prominent as the vendor of architectural books and prints, both English and foreign. The name of Robert Pricke, famous as an engraver and translator from the French, is well known. This can be verified by his imprint of 1673 on Le Muet's "Art of Fair Building," "Printed for Robert Pricke in Whitecross Street over against the Cross Keys, and at the Golden Lion, at the corner of New Cheapside next Bethlehem, where likewise you may have choice of other books of architecture, also maps, copy tints, Italian, French, and other prints." Many architects of the period, among whom was Vanbrugh, preferred to deal with Tonson at Amsterdam.

In the second half of the eighteenth century the imprint of Joseph Taylor appears, at first in the form, "Sold by J. Taylor at the Bible and Crown in Holborn, near Chancery Lane, 1776," then nearly opposite Great Turnstile, and later at the Architectural Library, No. 39 High Holborn. In those days folio volumes of architectural drawings were

published by subscription, and every person of distinction, from the nobility to carpenters, deemed it a privilege to have their names printed on the opening pages.

Taylor produced many important works, including Soane's early books and Hepplewhite's furniture designs. It is of interest in these days to contemplate the variety of the subjects dealt with in Taylor's catalogue, and to note the comparative cheapness of the books, which enabled even the small builder to form a working library and thus improve his taste and knowledge of detail.

The firm of Taylor continued its activities until 1825, when it was supplanted by Priestly & Weale, who heralded their appearance with a small edition of Stuart & Revett's "Antiquities of Athens"; another pocket edition was published in 1841 by Tilt & Bogue in Fleet Street and John Crossley of Leicester and Rugby. Although Taylor's business was to some extent overshadowed by new firms, his nephew removed from Holborn to 6 Barnard's Inn, and continued to interest himself in this particular branch of publishing, for he was responsible for the issue of Papworth's version of "Chambers' Civil Architecture," which was the chief book of reference in the 'forties.

Glancing at Priestly & Weale's catalogue of 1825 we find it to contain 200 pages and to give a list of 1,500 items. They were now in the first flight of publishers. Later on John Weale established himself at Taylor's old address, and turned his attention to meet the growing demands of the engineering profession as well as an occasional venture in architecture, including the magnificent volume by Professor C. R. Cockerell which appeared in 1860. Mention must also be made of Ackermann, who supplied the wants of the Regency Period.

At the time when Weale was the recognised arbiter for things in the architectural publishing way the name of Batsford first appears.

Bradley Thomas Batsford, the founder of the present firm, was apprenticed to a Mr. Dickens in 1837; his indentures to "the art and mystery of book-selling" are preserved among the archives of the firm.

At this period the discount controversy in which Charles Dickens took a part occupied the attention of the literary world, and young Batsford's employer was one who favoured the innovation, and in consequence was boycotted by other booksellers and publishers. The time soon came when Bradley Batsford, then a young man of 21, opened a small business in High Street, Holborn, moving a few years later to within a few feet of Taylor's site, No. 52 High Holborn. This business at first dealt with medical and general books, and an early catalogue of 1853 speaks of "Bradley Batsford's essay bookshop, three doors west of Brownlow Street." The death of John Weale in 1862, and the disposal of his stock three years later, further prepared the way for the

rise of the house of Batsford, and led to books dealing with architectural and engineering works becoming permanently and finally the subjects of the firm's interests. By this time the eldest son had entered the business, and the first ventures of the firm were made during the 'seventies, and for an unbroken period of over forty years the name of Batsford has been the distinguishing feature of nearly every book of importance since published. On the death of the second son in 1882, Herbert Batsford, who had been studying for the Bar, was asked by his father to take up a minor position in the firm, and for twenty-two years father and sons were associated. Herbert Batsford appeared on the scene at the time when the Gothic school had reached its zenith; then followed a barren period of architectural book production in marked contrast to the activity of the French and the Germans. It was an inferior book sent to Sir Gilbert's Scott's office that led to the formation of the Committee that resolved to issue privately the pioneer series of architectural records known as the "Spring Gardens Sketch Book."

There is an interesting article in *The Builder* for 1885 on books recommended by the Institute to be studied by students which contrasts the poverty of the books of that time with the profusion that now gives a student a wide range. From 1891 to the present day the firm of Batsford has been associated with the majority of the modern works in architecture, ranging from Mr. Gotch's folios, Messrs. Belcher & Macartney's later Renaissance examples, Mr. Stratton's Tudor architecture, and Mr. Ward's treatise on the Renaissance in France. It is noteworthy that the whole series of volumes on architecture produced in England are the result of private enterprise, and this is in marked contrast to the excellent system that pertains in France, where the Ministry of Fine Art has lent its support to recording the national monuments. Herbert Batsford soon realised that new methods were required if architects and the general public were to benefit from the study of books, and his immediate activities date from twenty years ago, and this policy was continued more vigorously after the father's death. There can be no denying the fact that Herbert Batsford was an enthusiast, not, however, of the dangerous type who rush headlong after the latest fashion, but a genius who carefully weighed the possibilities of a book, and looked upon it primarily from the point of view of the requirements of the practising architect. He knew his audience, and encouraged those who came to him with immature ideas to spare no pains to produce the best results obtainable. His knowledge of books was remarkable; he seldom had recourse to catalogues or library lists; what he did not at first fully understand he made his business to master, and astonished the majority of his friends with his vast knowledge of the atmosphere of the past. He had a passion amounting almost to an obsession for the works of the eighteenth century, and rare taste and

discrimination as well as a minute knowledge of the prints, mezzotints, and engravings produced during the past three hundred years. His study of ornament and craftsmanship was founded on keen artistic perception, with admiration amounting to reverence for the works of real artists. The contents of every library and museum of importance in the country were known to him, and his vivacious figure was frequently to be seen in the print room at the British Museum as well as at Kensington. In his researches he discovered the existence of an early state of "Piranesi's imaginative Carceri." As a student of London, Herbert Batsford had few equals; all the aspects of London life in the past made an especial appeal to his receptive and sensitive temperament: he studied with care all that could be learned from bygone customs, and as his knowledge widened he responded more keenly to the teachings of history. In addition to his study of the Metropolis, nearly every place of importance in the kingdom was visited, as well as the majority of the cities on the Continent. Those who accompanied him on his travels know the almost boyish enthusiasm he expressed for fine work of every description. Herbert Batsford had no sympathy with small policies: he demanded books from his authors of large scale, apart from size. His delight was in books—fine books, rare books, new books—and yet again books, a factor which prompted him to publish the "Fellowship Series," edited by Mrs. Arthur Stratton. In the advancement of taste he played a very noble part, and if at times his attitude was didactic he more than atoned for it by the confidence he inspired among those who had the good fortune to be under his direction. Herbert Batsford was more than an ordinary publisher, he was primarily a patron of the arts, and did more than most men to strengthen the position of architects with the public. It required courage to finance ventures without a Government subsidy, but it was rare for him to make a mistake, and the series of volumes bearing the name of the firm carry the impress of taste and distinction for the inspiration of posterity.

I have avoided going into personal details of Mr. Batsford's character, of which I have a fund of pleasant anecdotes; on the contrary, I feel that the only suitable mark of appreciation to his memory is to record the history of the house in a way he would have liked.

A. E. RICHARDSON [F.].

Mr. RAFFLES DAVISON [*Hon. A.*] writes:

When a vivid personality is suddenly withdrawn from our midst our thoughts are instinctively turned backwards, seeking for a mental summary of the life that is gone, and so subtle and varied are the influences at work about us that it is not always easy to find at once a clear and satisfactory record. But the death of Herbert Batsford we can say at once and

without any question means a loss to the architectural profession—a loss of great service which he would yet have rendered to the difficult and arduous task of publishing the best form of architectural literature known to our time. The old and reputable house of Batsford would never have taken such a high and distinguished place in the book world had it not been for the developments which followed the pioneer work of the founder of the firm and his elder sons, Mr. Bradley and Mr. Henry. Herbert Batsford was certainly fortunate in his collaborators—his various employees and co-directors—and especially in the association with his nephew, Mr. Harry Batsford, whose ability in regard to literary matters and book-publishing has been remarkable, even in the company of such a strong and energetic personality as Mr. Herbert. This is in itself a happy augury for the future of the firm. Only those behind the scenes can know how great a part the capable publisher plays in the issue of such a series of books as those which bear the name of Batsford. When the author hands in his manuscript it is assumed by many that the rest of the business is quite easy and perfunctory, but in a large number of publications the real trouble seems to begin when the publisher commences his part of the work. Messrs. Batsford's point of view has always contained a high ideal, and the best that could be done within the limits of size and cost has always been aimed at. For this maintenance of a high standard, and indeed very largely for its creation, Mr. Herbert was responsible, and the architectural profession owes him a great debt of thanks for the quality—may one not say the dignity?—with which he has endowed his long series of publications. After all, this is a point which affects us very closely, and we cannot be indifferent to the fact that our profession has had such a finely produced bibliography. In acknowledgment of what he has been and what he has done the memory of Herbert Batsford ought surely to be preserved in some tangible form.

T. RAFFLES DAVISON [*Hon. A.*].

REVIEWS.

PULPITS IN ENGLISH CHURCHES.

Pulpits, Lecterns, and Organs in English Churches. By J. Charles Cox, LL.D., F.S.A. With 155 illustrations. 80. 1916. 7s. 6d. [Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press.]

This work forms one volume in the series of books on the ecclesiology of English churches of the Oxford University Press—an excellent series which does what it sets out to do thoroughly and well—viz., to give a fairly complete record of the various furniture of the parish churches of this country down to about the eighteenth century, with descriptions and illustrations and some comments.

Dr. Cox in his preface suggests that the name of Mr.

Francis Bond, the General Editor of the series, might in fairness be bracketed with his own, and he adds: "to him these pages are indebted for all the labour and scholarly insight involved in the selection and arrangement of the vast number of choice illustrations . . . as well as to corrections and advice in the letterpress."

Both author and editor have produced an excellent and valuable book. It claims to be the first since Mr. Dollman published his *Examples of Ancient Pulpits* in 1849. The first chapter refutes a popular delusion that preaching was a special characteristic of the Reformation period, and it goes on to prove that the exact contrary is the case. The author also adduces evidence "to upset the foolish but often held notion that sermons were usually preached in Latin and not in the vernacular. The fact is that, so far as England is concerned, Latin sermons were reserved for the learned, and that for every Latin sermon at least one hundred were preached in the vulgar tongue."

He goes so far as to say in his preface that "Manuals of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries enjoyed on the laity the importance of preaching, making it a matter of greater moment to listen to a sermon than even to hear Mass."

To support this statement he quotes from *Dives et Pauper*, which, he says, "appears to have been by far the most popular book of religious instruction in England, first brought out in the middle of the fifteenth century." It is interesting as showing the beginning, excellently meant, of one of the great mistakes of the Protestants, that of confusing the word of the preacher with the Word of God.

It is certainly strange that anyone having knowledge of pre-Reformation times should ever have supposed that sermons were rare in those days. There were books, of course, but, as every copy had to be written, it is obvious that the number was very limited, and consequently the ability to read also limited to those comparatively few who had access to books. All knowledge was therefore very largely imparted by word of mouth. Thus the need for preaching is abundantly obvious, and the mediæval people were extremely practical, as their works bear witness to this day. There is so much to show how deeply the people of all classes loved their churches and how they enjoyed using them that some in the nineteenth century who had suffered much from long and very dull sermons (and I think we all suffered) felt this phenomenon could only be explained by absence of any sermon, and so offered this explanation without further considering the matter and regardless of evidence to the contrary.

Dr. Cox tells us that there are upwards of sixty stone pulpits of pre-Reformation date still left in this country and about a hundred mediæval wooden pulpits, chiefly of the fifteenth century; some few, however, are as old as the fourteenth century.

The illustrations in this book will prove, to those who have not seen the pulpits themselves, that they were intended to be prominent and important things in the

church; many are of considerable size, and as much loving care and enthusiasm has been spent on the design and craftsmanship as upon the font, or the altar.

Those at Nantwich, Cheshire (p. 19), at Arundel, Sussex (p. 21), with its canopied tester, the well-known one at Cirencester (p. 39), are amongst the best of those made of stone, and Fotheringay (p. 71), which appears to be of the time of Edward IV. and has a "small canopy of fan vaulting," which is covered over by another of seventeenth century workmanship, the effect of which in the illustration is agreeable, is a beautiful example of a wooden pulpit.

A few of the wooden pulpits in Norfolk retain much of their original painting; "the most notable example" is at "Burlingham St. Edmund."

The wooden pulpit at Worstead, Norfolk (p. 31), appears to stand independently and to be capable of being moved to any position desired, and so does that at Abbey Dore, Herefordshire (p. 91). The latter is seventeenth century workmanship. It seems probable that down to the fourteenth century most of the pulpits were movable structures placed where most convenient for preaching. There are still some in use; and one would suppose that many more will be used in the future, especially in large churches.

Dr. Cox says of the pulpit at Melton, in Derbyshire (p. 17), that "it is one of the oldest in Christendom." He describes it as "a unique example hewn out of a solid block of oak or section of a great tree, 4 feet 8½ inches high, 7 feet 8 inches in diameter," hexagonal in plan with one side cut out to form a narrow entrance. He dates it c. 1350-60. One would have thought that older examples of pulpits were known, if not in this country at least in the south or east of Europe.

"Pulpits in these pages are followed up county by county in alphabetical order under three headings—namely, mediæval examples of both stone and wood, and post-Reformation instances up to about the year 1700." Pulpits occupy two-thirds of the book; then comes an interesting chapter on hour-glasses, which the author tells us "came into general use in the Church of England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries." It is well illustrated, and has something to say about the length of sermons, quoting George Herbert to the effect that too great length maketh "the hearer weary, and so he grows from not relishing to loathing." Excellent advice.

This chapter ends with a list of extant hour-glass stands, and a bibliography. Chapter VIII. is devoted to lecterns of brass and stone. It speaks of the development of the lectern from the ambo of the early church and its use during mediæval times. Many lecterns are described, and a list is given of brass eagle lecterns, including those of the seventeenth century. Chapter IX. is of lecterns of wood, and contains a list of the surviving old wooden eagles, which number about a score. Both these chapters are fully and well illustrated. Beside eagle and pelican lecterns there are several with double or single desks,

the best of which is perhaps that at All Saints', Pavement, York.

Chapter X. is of reading desks, a thing which the old Cambridge Camden Society described, if unkindly, certainly correctly, as an "abomination." Chapter XI. deals with desks for chained books, with two pictures and a list of the more important stands to be found in churches. The last chapter is of organs and organ cases, with several illustrations. None that remain are of mediæval date.

The book is provided with Index Locorum and Index Rerum.

CHARLES SPOONER [F.]

THE BUILDER'S FOREMAN.

The Builder's Foreman. A Practical Guide to his Training. By J. F. Outram. With 120 illustrations. 8s. Lond. 1916. Price 5s. [B. T. Batsford, Ltd., 94 High Holborn.]

"The bearings of these observations"—to adapt a famous authority—"lays in the title thereof," the essential of the book being that it is addressed not to budding architects, who hope to devise, but to intelligent workmen, who aspire to carry out. It is quite possible that there have been previous publications from this standpoint, but they have not come in my way.

The preliminary chapters deal with the minor moralities, and appear to a middle-class, middle-aged mind to be rather of the nature of little excursions into the obvious:

"The royal road to success may be summed up in two words, 'Hard work,' and so on.

But later, when we specialise, the advice is pleasing even to the cynical:

In choosing workmen "avoid engaging friends and relations: they will undermine your authority."

"The clerk of works should not be treated as if he were devoid of brains."

Remember that "interviewing architects often necessitates a great amount of tact."

"Idle promises in regard to dates of completion should be avoided."

The technical part of the book (which is the main part) is valuable; there are useful hints on the keeping of note-books and making schedules, points to be remembered in clearing sites, erecting hoardings, seeing after one's comfort in the matter of an office, and arranging plant.

Then, when serious business begins, there is information not only as to the form of shores but as to the difficulties which may arise in erecting them. One is told how to deal with water on the site, and the best ways of forming temporary roadways and crane scaffolding; there is help in underpinning, levelling, setting out, and much else.

The illustrations are either to scale or figured and are clear and very informing. The language throughout is simple and straightforward, and at the end of the book there are chapters on the nice handling of a theodolite and a humble approach to the confines of

the higher mathematics, which may be appreciated by persons of presumably more learning and experience than that generally possessed by the class to which this excellent little book primarily appeals.

HERBERT G. IBBERSON [*F.*].

CORRESPONDENCE.

The Longitudinal Rib in Gothic Construction.

To the Editor, JOURNAL R.I.B.A.,—

SIR,—On reading Sir Thomas Jackson's lately published book, *Gothic Architecture in France, England, and Italy*, I find that he takes issue with me on two points of capital importance in Gothic construction—namely, (1) The stiling of the longitudinal rib, and (2) the function of this rib. It will be noticed that Sir Thomas calls it a wall-rib.

On page 39 he says: * "Mr. Moore seems to think that this stiling of the wall-rib, so that the panel of ashlar next the wall rises vertically for some height instead of spreading laterally along the wall, and thereby reduces the width of the conoid of vaulting where it reaches the wall, is a mode of confining the thrust of the vault against the side wall to the area of support given by the buttress outside. In this he is mistaken. The two panels next the wall exercise no thrust upon it whatever, and would stand without it. . . . The stiling of the panels has no other object but that of giving more room for clerestory windows." Now, I have not said that the side panels exercise thrust. It is not a question of the side panels, but of the whole vault thrust. It is quite true that these panels exert no independent outward thrusts, but it is obvious that as parts of the vault conoid they must participate in any movement of the conoid as a whole. In other words, any yielding to thrust in the system as a whole will, of course, carry the side panels with it. The remarks about the panels have, therefore, no pertinence.

That the object of the stiling was not to give more room for clerestory windows is clearly demonstrated by the fact that in the beginning no advantage was taken of it to enlarge the windows, which remain as before, small openings in walls. This is the case in Noyon, St. Leu, Laon, Paris, and all other transitional Gothic monuments. It is not until we come to the fully developed style that the wall disappears, and the whole space between the piers becomes a void, save for mullions and tracery, as at Reims, Amiens, and Beauvais. That the stiling gathers the thrusts on the pier is obvious, and this being so there can, I think, be no doubt that it was done for this purpose. What other rational explanation of it is possible?

It may be remarked, in passing, that the clerestory opening of a developed Gothic building is not a window at all. It is rather an intercolumniation. To

call it a window is to ignore that skeleton construction which primarily distinguishes Gothic architecture.

As for the second point—namely, the function of the longitudinal rib, Sir Thomas Jackson says (page 255): "Exception might be taken to some of Mr. Moore's conditions on the ground that an architectural feature is only justified by structural meaning (*sic*). For instance, the wall-rib does not really belong to the vault at all, but to the wall into which it is bonded. It is rather ornamental than necessary. It is often omitted, and the side panel rests on a chase, or set-off, in the wall." But on page 248 he defines what he calls "the constructional theory of a Gothic church in perfection"; and in the course of this definition he says: "The whole width above"—*i.e.*, above the triforium—"which closes the side vault is occupied by an immense window whose outer arch forms the wall-rib of the vault."* Now, if this be true, there can, of course, be no wall, and if there be no wall there can be no propriety in speaking of a wall-rib. And if the arch of the opening (miscalled a window) forms the longitudinal rib (miscalled a wall-rib) of the vault, how can it be said to be bonded into the wall? Since no wall exists, this rib forms the support of the end of the vault cell, and it thus very clearly belongs to the vault, and is in no sense a merely ornamental feature. Sir Thomas Jackson has here forgotten his definition, which is based on the Gothic of the Ile-de-France, and is thinking of English construction, with its heavy clerestory wall, which does not answer to the definition, and is clearly not Gothic construction if the definition be correct.

I may add that this definition bears a close resemblance to my own, given more than twenty-five years ago, in the book which Sir Thomas Jackson criticises. It appears strange that such a definition should have been framed by a writer who includes English and Italian pointed architecture in the Gothic category, for it counters all claim of these architectures to be classed as Gothic. To bring these radically different styles under the general appellation Gothic is to make Gothic architecture a structurally amorphous art. And it is passing strange that it should not yet be seen that just as characteristics of structure differentiate genera and species in natural organic forms, so do structural systems fundamentally differentiate architectural styles.

CHARLES H. MOORE [*Hon. A.*]

Heat-Retaining Plasters for Inner Surfaces of Walls.

Department of Heating and Ventilating Engineering,
University College, London, 1 Feb. 1917.

To the Editor, JOURNAL R.I.B.A.,—

DEAR SIR,—I am engaged on behalf of the Committee on Fuel Economy of the British Association in making investigations on the consumption of fuel for domestic heating and other purposes with a view to economising the national resources. One branch of this investigation has as its object to determine forms of building construction which will reduce the

* Referring to my *Development and Character of Gothic Architecture*, pp. 130-133, Second Edition.

* The italics are mine.

loss of heat through the walls of a dwelling house. In this connection I am endeavouring to compare the heat-retaining effect of different kinds of plaster applied to the inner surfaces of walls.

There must be many inexpensive compositions known to some of your readers, which will probably produce a great effect in this direction. I write, therefore, to ask any such persons who are interested in this most important national problem, and who are in a position to submit suitable samples, to communicate with me at the University College.

We have erected in the laboratories here an apparatus capable of making tests of the exact effect of such plaster, and I should be prepared to submit any samples sent to me to that test if it appeared to offer any prospect of success.

May I request you, therefore, to ask any of your readers to give us their assistance in this nationally important matter.—Yours faithfully,

ARTHUR H. BARKER.

An Opportunity for Reviving One's French.

DEAR SIR,—At the present time there are probably a number of professional men who through the manifold occupations of normal times have allowed their linguistic talents to tarnish, and who feel that our future more intimate relations with our neighbours points to the desirability of renewing association with languages other than their own. At the same time any such desire is hardly likely to mature in the direction of attending students' classes or public lectures. To any such colleagues may I be allowed to commend the private tuition of two ladies who are working together, and are prepared to take adult pupils in informal conversational lessons in French at the private house of one of them at Hampstead. One, of French nationality, possesses a long experience of teaching her language, and exercises it in a most practical manner; while the other, who is English, was educated in and has spent many years in Paris, and is a vivacious conversationalist.

Yours faithfully,

F.R.I.B.A.

[Inquiries concerning the above may be addressed to the Editor, JOURNAL R.I.B.A., 9, Conduit Street.]

Free Training of Draughtsmen for Munitions Offices.

Mr. S. B. K. Caulfield [F.], of 23 Old Buildings, Lincoln's Inn, W.C., writes: "There still are vacancies for junior draughtsmen in the various munition offices. I will gladly prepare, free of charge, any members of the R.I.B.A. and A.A. who will come here. The pay, of course is not big, but over a hundred people who have been with me (the majority were women, and could not draw to scale before they started the month's course) were given salaries ranging from 25s. to 3 guineas a week, and all are doing well. Men with a knowledge of motors, aeroplanes, machinery, or shells would have a great advantage."



9 CONDUIT STREET, LONDON, W., 10th February 1917.

CHRONICLE.

The R.I.B.A. Record of Honour: Fortieth List.

Killed in Action.

WOODLEY, Second Lieut. STANLEY W., Royal Flying Corps [Probationer R.I.B.A.]. Killed in action 22nd January.

Lieut. Woodley, only son of Mr. W. S. Woodley, was a pupil of the late Mr. G. L. Sutcliffe [F.]. He passed the Preliminary Examination in 1914, and had completed his Testimonies of Study for the Intermediate. Joining the Forces in May 1915, he was granted a commission in the Army Service Corps in the following November. He graduated for a Flying Officer's certificate last June, and had been in France since July. He had done much valuable work at the Front, and had been mentioned in despatches.

Members' Sons killed.

HELSDON, Second Lieut. HAROLD LEOFRIC, Dorsetshire Regt., attached to Royal Warwickshire Regt., eldest son of Councillor Horace J. Helsdon, J.P. [F.]. Aged twenty.

HOWELL, Second Lieut. ROLAND BASIL, Northumberland Fusiliers.

HOWELL, Second Lieut. NORMAN A., King's Shropshire Light Infantry.

The two last-named were the eldest and second sons of Mr. W. Roland Howell [F.], of Reading, and were both preparing to follow their father's profession. The eldest, Lieut. Roland B. Howell, in October 1915 was reported "wounded and missing," after leading a bombing party, and nothing has since been heard of him. The War Office have now intimated that they are forced to believe that he was killed. Lieut. Norman Howell was home on his first leave from the 6th to the 16th December, and fell within a week of his return.

Awards for Distinguished Service.

ATKIN-BERRY: Captain HERBERT COURTENAY, Staff Captain, Heavy Branch Machine Gun Corps: awarded the Military Cross. Captain Atkins-Berry, the second son of Mr. Wm. H. Atkins-Berry [F.], and a Student R.I.B.A., on the outbreak of war gave up a good appointment as architect in the Malay States and returned to England to join the Forces.

MOSCROP: Captain and Adjutant WM. NOËL JOHNSON, Durham Light Infantry: awarded the Military Cross. Captain Moscrop [Student R.I.B.A. 1913] is son of Mr. W. J. Moscrop [F.], of Feethams,

Darlington; he joined the Forces in August 1914, and proceeded to France in April 1915. He was also mentioned in Lord French's Despatches, January 1916.

Wounded.

DICKSEE, Second Lieut. HAROLD JOHN HUGH, Royal Flying Corps [*Student*] (son of Mr. Bernard Dicksee [F.]). Wounded in left forearm by machine-gun bullet. Now recovered and preparing to rejoin.

Serving with the Forces.

The following is the Fortieth List of Members, Licentiates, and Students R.I.B.A. serving with the Forces, the total to date being 69 Fellows, 510 Associates, 311 Licentiates, and 291 Students:—

ASSOCIATES.

Dannatt, F. B.: Lieut., R.E. Services.
Hall, Vincent: Sanitary Section R.A.M.C.
Dickenson, W. F.: Lieut., Hants Regt.
Foggitt, G. H.: Royal Engineers.

LICENTIATES.

Dukes, W. B.: M.G.T.C.
Flinn, H. E.: Officer Cadet Battalion.
Sturges, H. J.: R.A.M.C.
Wilkinson, Stephen: Lieut. R.F.C.

Promotions.

Mr. S. Birkett [A.] gazetted Lieut. in the Lancs. Fusiliers.
Sec. Lieut. Cecil L. Wright [A.], R.G.A., from Artists' Rifles O.T.C.

Charing Cross Bridge: The Railway Company's New Bill.

The Parliamentary Committee of the London County Council reported as follows at last Tuesday's Meeting:—

We have been in communication with the Improvements Committee upon the subject of the new Bill, and they have informed us that, after having given full consideration to the matter and having conferred, as authorised by the Council on December 19th, 1916 (p. 1138), with representatives of the various authorities and bodies concerned, they are of opinion that the question of the execution of a scheme having for its object the improvement of the area occupied by Charing Cross station and bridge is one of national importance; that the reasons for the rejection of the Company's Bill of last session apply with equal force to the present Bill; and that, as the works proposed by the company cannot be executed during the war, and probably not for some time afterwards, the Bill should be opposed by the Council on all grounds in order to secure a postponement of the consideration of the whole matter until after the declaration of peace. In explanation of their opinion that consideration of the whole matter should be postponed, the Improvements Committee point out that the present time is not opportune for the public authorities concerned in the future of Charing Cross to consider schemes or enter into commitments for future improvements; that in their judgment the present time is equally inopportune for the company to make application to Parliament for powers prejudicial to any possible scheme of such a nature and not capable of execution until after the war; and that, consistently with this view of the position, the Council should not be asked, as a condition of the rejection or withdrawal of the Bill, to commit itself as to its policy in the matter.

We agree that the reasons which induced the Council to oppose on preamble the Bill which was introduced last Session apply with equal force at the present time, and it

must, of course, be kept in mind that the Bill of last session was rejected by Parliament.

The Report concluded with the following recommendations:

(a) That the South Eastern and London, Chatham and Dover Railways Bill, 1917, be opposed with the object of securing its rejection.

(b) That it be an instruction to the Parliamentary Committee in giving effect to the foregoing resolution (a) that nothing shall be done to restrict in any way the Council's freedom of action in regard to any scheme having for its object the improvement of the area occupied by Charing Cross railway station and bridge.

(c) That in order to give effect to the foregoing resolution (a) petitions be sealed and presented against the Bill.

OBITUARY.

John Hebb, who died on the 27th November last in his eighty-third year, was elected an Associate of the Institute in 1868, Fellow in 1882, and was placed on the list of Retired Fellows in 1902. He was articled to Mr. Edward I'Anson in 1852 for five years, attended Professor Donaldson's lectures at University College, and was awarded a Certificate in the Art Division. He afterwards studied for eighteen months in France and Italy, touring in company with W. Eden Nesfield, George Donaldson, and others, and on his return entered the office of Mr. George Smith as principal draughtsman. During this time he was employed by the Defence Commissioners in preparing drawings of fortifications, barracks, &c. He started practice in 1863, his work being chiefly in connection with business premises and warehouses in the City. About 1876 he became Assistant Architect in the Office of the Metropolitan Board of Works, and on the formation of the London County Council was appointed Chief Assistant Architect, for a time serving as Acting Superintending Architect. He retired from the County Council some fifteen years ago. Mr. Hebb was a keen member of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. His son, Mr. Oswald C. Hebb, writes: "Of considerable culture and attainment, my father had a graceful talent for versifying and a pretty conceit in parody. He delighted in rendering French and particularly Italian poetry into English verse. He was interested in the pre-Raphaelite movement and in many of its adherents, such as William Morris and his friends. J. McNeill Whistler, George du Maurier, Charles Eastlake, and Pellegrini ("Ape" of *Vanity Fair*) are names I recall in my boyhood." Mr. Hebb served for a time on the Institute Literature Committee, and some years ago was a frequent contributor to the JOURNAL.

Charles R. Baker King, whose death also occurred on 27th November, at the age of seventy-eight, was the senior member of the Associate class, having been elected in 1862. After serving his articles with Mr. Dawkes he entered the office of Sir Gilbert Scott, and eventually became his chief assistant, the supervision

of the fabric of Westminster Abbey being entrusted to his care. He did a great deal of original work, his speciality being church screens, of which that at North Petherton is a fine example. In August last he celebrated his golden wedding, and was present only a few weeks ago at the Jubilee Festival of Christ Church, Brondesbury, of which he was architect.

Edward Cratney, of Wallsend-on-Tyne and Newcastle-on-Tyne, whose death was announced at the General Meeting in December, had been a Licentiate of the Institute, and was only elected to the Fellowship in June last. Though so young—he was only thirty-four when he died—he had achieved a considerable reputation in the North of England, having been successful in competitions for designs of free libraries, housing schemes and various public works. He was awarded the gold, silver and bronze medals for his designs for the model cottages erected at the North of England Model Cottage Exhibition, and was architect to the Newcastle Corporation for their proposed housing scheme at Walker and for the new cemetery scheme at Whitley Bay. He was articled in 1896 to Mr. Stephen Piper for three years, and was transferred in 1898 to Messrs. Hicks & Charlewood to complete. He started practice on his own account in 1907. His executed works included Libraries at Annfield Plain, Hendon (Sunderland), and Monkswearmouth; Council Offices, Newburn-on-Tyne; Secondary School, Blyth; Laboratories for the Thermal Syndicate, Wallsend-on-Tyne; Picture Hall, Wallsend-on-Tyne; numerous houses and cottages in the North. He designed furniture and fittings to most of his buildings, and had laid out various estates.

MINUTES.

At the Fourth General Meeting (Ordinary) of the Session 1916-17, held Monday, 5th February 1917, at 4.30 p.m.—Present, Mr. Ernest Newton, A.R.A., *President*, in the Chair; 22 Fellows (including 14 members of the Council), and 2 Associates (both members of the Council)—the Minutes of the Meeting held 8th January having been published in the *JOURNAL*, were taken as read and signed as correct.

The Hon. Secretary having announced the decease of Edward Robert Robson (father of Mr. Philip A. Robson [F.]), elected *Associate* in 1860, *Fellow* in 1864, who had served as Member of the Council, on the old Board of Examiners, and on various Committees; Joseph Foster Wood, elected *Associate* in 1883, *Fellow* in 1910, sometime President of the Bristol Society of Architects and representative of that body on the Institute Council; Ernest Montagu Thomas (brother of Sir Brumwell Thomas [F.]), of the Public Works Department, Madras, elected *Fellow* in 1913 from the Class of Licentiates; and Archibald Dunn, *Hon. Associate*, elected in 1910, it was resolved that the regrets of the Institute for the loss of these members be entered on the Minutes, and that messages of sympathy and condolence be addressed to Mr. Philip A. Robson and to Sir A. Brumwell Thomas, and to the relatives of the other members mentioned.

The decease was also announced of Edwin Cecil Lawrence, Gilbert Higginbottom, John Powell Edwards, Christopher Adlersparre, and Thomas Francis Hewitt, *Licentiates*.

It was resolved that letters of sympathy be addressed to Mr. W. Roland Howell [F.], who had lost two sons in the war, and to Mr. Horace J. Helsdon [F.], who had lost his eldest son.

The Meeting also expressed its deep regrets at the untimely death of Mr. Herbert Batsford, head of the firm of Messrs. B. T. Batsford, the architectural book publishers, and a vote of sympathy and condolence was passed to his widow and to his nephew and successor, Mr. Harry Batsford.

It was announced that the following Associates had been nominated as candidates for the Fellowship—viz., Percy Morris (Exeter), *Cates Prizeman* 1897, and Christopher William Frederick Wheeler.

The President announced that the Council proposed to submit to His Majesty the King the name of Henri-Paul Nénot, Architect of the New Sorbonne, Paris, as a fit recipient of the Royal Gold Medal for the current year.

The meeting separated at 4.45.

NOTICES.

The Council have decided to issue the JOURNAL of the Institute monthly instead of fortnightly until further notice.

A SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING will be held Monday, 5th March 1917, at 4.30 p.m., for the following purpose:—

To elect the ROYAL GOLD MEDALLIST for the current year. The Chairman to move: "That, subject to His Majesty's gracious sanction, the Royal Gold Medal for the promotion of architecture be presented this year to Monsieur HENRI-PAUL NÉNOT, Membre de l'Institut de France [*Hon. Corr. M.*, Paris] in recognition of the merit of his executed work."

A GENERAL MEETING (BUSINESS) will be held at the conclusion of the above meeting for the following purposes:—

To read the Minutes of the General Meeting held Monday, 5th February 1917;

To proceed with the election of the following candidates for membership:—

AS FELLOWS (2).

MORRIS: PERCY [*Cates Prizeman* 1897, *Associate* 1897], Devon County Architect (Education), 1 Blackhall Road and 2 Heavitree Park.

Proposed by H. W. Johnson, Arnold Thornely, James Crocker.

WHEELER: CHRISTOPHER WILLIAM FREDERICK, Lieut. A.S.C. [*Associate* 1902], 7 Stone Buildings, Lincoln's Inn (office now closed), and "Melrose," St. James Road, Sutton, Surrey.

Proposed by Frederick Wheeler, Fred. W. Marks, Matt. Garbutt.

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